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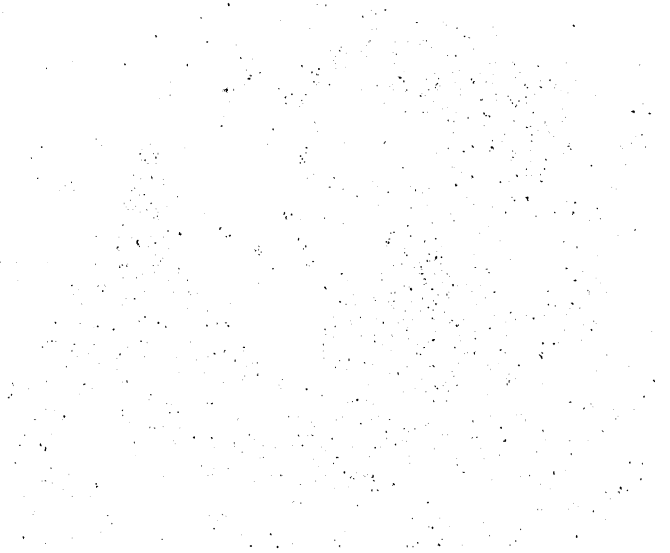

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MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH FOUCHÉ

DUKE OF OTRANTO

MINISTER OF THE GENERAL POLICE OF FRANCE

WITH PORTRAITS

GIBBINGS & COMPANY, LIMITED

18, BURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.

1894

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April 30, 1908.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THESE Memoirs have neither been produced by party spirit, hatred, nor a desire of vengeance, and still less that they might afford food for scandal and malignity. I respect all that is deserving of honour in the opinions of men. Let me be read, and my intentions, my views, my sentiments, and the political motives by which I was guided in the exercise of the highest duties, will then be appreciated; let me be read, and it will then be seen if, in the councils of the republic and of Napoleon, I have not been the constant opponent of the extravagant measures of the government; let me be read, and will be apparent if I have not displayed some courage in my warnings and remonstrances; in short, by perusing me, the conviction will follow that I owed it as a duty to myself to write what I have written.

The only means of rendering these Memoirs advantageous to my own reputation, and useful to the history of those eventful times, was to rest them solely upon the pure and simple truth; to this I have been induced, both by disposition and conviction; my situation also made it an imperative law to me. Was it not natural that I should thus beguile the *ennui* attendant upom fallen power?

In all its stages, the revolution had accustomed me to an

extreme activity of mind and memory; irritated by solitude, this activity required some vent. It has been, therefore, with a sort of unrestrained delight that I have written this first part of my recollections;[1] I have, it is true, retouched them, but no material change has been made, not even during the anguish of my last misfortune—for what greater misfortune can there be than to wander in banishment, an exile from one's country!

France, my country, ever dear to me, never shall I again behold thee! At what a price, therefore, have I purchased my past power and grandeur. Those whom I once succoured now offer me no friendly hand. But in vain would they condemn my name to the silence of oblivion. I shall find means to disappoint the expectations of those who are already watching for the spoils of my reminiscences and revelations; of those who are preparing to lay snares for my children. If my children are too young to suspect the artifices of the designing, I will guard them against them by seeking, far from the crowd of ungrateful men, a discreet and faithful friend. The human species is not yet so depraved as to render my researches unavailing. But what do I say? This other self I have already found, and it is to his discretion and fidelity that I confide these Memoirs. I constitute him the sole judge, after my decease, of the proper time for their publication. He is in possession of my ideas upon the subject, and I am convinced he will only place my work in the hands of an honourable man, uninfluenced by the coteries of the capital, one equally superior to the base intrigue and sordid speculation. This is assuredly my only and best guarantee that these Memoirs

[1] This advertisement was prefixed to the first part; both are included in the present volume.

shall remain free from the interpolations and garblings of the enemies to truth and sincerity.

In the same spirit of candour I am now preparing the second part of them ; I do not blind myself to the fact that I have to treat of a period of peculiar delicacy, of one presenting innumerable and serious difficulties, whether we consider the times, the personages, or the calamities which it embraces. But truth, when not deformed by the malignancy of the passions, will ever command the attention of mankind.

NOTE.—This edition has been printed from the text of the revised and corrected second edition, published by Charles Knight in 1825.

LIST OF PLATES.

FOUCHÉ. Engraved by Wolff. (*Frontispiece.*)

NAPOLEON. Engraved by Hopwood. *Face page* 64.

——— Ditto. *Face page* 346.

MEMOIRS OF JOSEPH FOUCHÉ,

DUKE OF OTRANTO.

THE man who, in turbulent and revolutionary times, was solely indebted for the honours and power with which he was invested, and, in short, for his splendid elevation, to his own prudence and abilities; who, at first, elected a national representative, was, upon the re-establishment of order, an ambassador, three times a minister, a senator, a duke, and one of the principal directors of state affairs; this man would degrade himself if, to answer the calumnies of libellers, he descended to apology or captious refutations: he must use other arms.

This man, then, is myself. Raised by the revolution, I fell from my grandeur, from the effects alone of a counter-revolution, which I had foreseen, and might have warded off, had I not found myself unarmed at the moment of the crisis.

This second fall has exposed me, defenceless, to the clamours of malignity and the insults of ingratitude;—me, who for a long time invested with a mysterious and terrible power, never wielded it but to calm the passions, dissolve factions, and prevent conspiracies;—me, who was never-ceasingly employed in moderating and tempering power, in

conciliating and amalgamating the jarring elements and conflicting interests which divided France. No one dares deny that such was my conduct, so long as I exercised any influence in the government or in the councils of the state. What have I, an exile, to oppose to these furious enemies, to this rabble which now persecute me, after having grovelled at my feet? Shall I answer them with the cold declamations of the school, or with refined and academic periods? Certainly not. I will confound them by facts and proofs, by a true exposition of my labours, and of my thoughts, both as a minister and a statesman; by the faithful recital of the political events, and the singular circumstances, through which I steered in times of turbulence and violence. This is the object I propose to myself.

From truth I think I have nothing to dread; and even were it so, I would speak it. The time for divulging it has arrived: I will speak it, cost what it may, so that when the tomb covers my mortal remains, my name shall be bequeathed to the judgment of history. It is, however, just that I should appear before its tribunal with these Memoirs in my hand.

And first, let me not be considered responsible for the revolution,—neither for the misdirection of its course, nor the energy of its dictation. I was nothing, I possessed no authority when its first shocks, overturning France, shook Europe to its foundations. Besides, what was this revolution? It is notorious, that previous to the year 1789, presentiments of the destruction of empires had created uneasiness in the monarchy. Empires are not exempted from that universal law which subjects all mundane things to change and decomposition. Has there ever been one whose historical duration has exceeded a certain number of ages? At most, their greatest longevity may be fixed at twelve or fourteen centuries; whence it may be inferred that a monarchy which had already lasted thirteen hundred

years without having received any deadly attack, was not far from a catastrophe. Of what consequence is it, if rising from its ashes and reorganized, it has subjected Europe to the yoke and terror of its arms? Should its power again escape, again will it decline and perish. Let us not inquire what may be the new metamorphoses to which it is destined. The geographical configuration of France ensures us a distinguished part in the ages yet to come. . Gaul, when conquered by the masters of the world, remained subjected only for three hundred years. Other invaders are now forging, in the north, the chains which shall enslave Europe. The revolution erected a bulwark which might have arrested them for a time—it was being demolished piecemeal: but though destroyed, it will again be raised, for the present age is powerful; it carries along with it men, parties, and governments.

You who exclaim so furiously against the prodigies of the revolution—you who have gone through it without daring to look upon it—you have submitted to it, and perhaps may submit to it once more.

Who provoked it, and whence did we first see it rise! From the saloons of the great, from the cabinets of the ministers. It was invited, provoked, by the parliaments, and by those about the king,—by young colonels, by court mistresses, by pensioned men of letters, whose persons were protected, and sentiments re-echoed by duchesses.

I have seen the nation blush at the depravity of the higher classes, the licentiousness of the clergy, the ignorant blunders of the ministers; and at the picture of the disgusting dissoluteness of the modern Babylon.

Was it not those that were considered the flowers of France, who, for forty years, established a worship in honour of Voltaire and Rousseau? Was it not among the higher classes that the mania of democratical independence, transplanted from the United States into the French soil, first took root? Dreams of a republic were already afloat, while

corruption was at its height in the monarchy! Even the example of a monarch exemplary and strict in his morals could not arrest the torrent. During this demoralization of the upper classes, the nation increased in knowledge and intellect. By continually hearing emancipation represented as a duty, it at length believed it as such. History itself can here attest that the nation was unacquainted with the arts which prepared the catastrophe. It might have been made to have advanced with the times; the King, and all men of intellect desired it. But the corruption and avarice of the great, the errors of the magistrates and of the court, and the mistakes of the ministry, dug the pit of destruction. It was, besides, so easy to urge to extremities a petulant and inflammable nation, one which, on the slightest provocation, would rush into excesses! Who fired the train? Did the Archbishop of Sens, did Necker the Swiss, Mirabeau, La Fayette, D'Orleans, Adrian Duport, Chauderlos Laclos, the Staëls, the Larochefoucaulds, the Beauveaus, the Montmorencys,[1] the Noailles, the Lameths, the La-Tour du Pin, the Lefrancs de Pompignan, and so many other promoters of the triumphs of 1789 over the royal authority—did these belong to the *tiers-état?* But for the meetings of the Palais Royal and Mont Rouge, the Breton Club had been harmless. There would have been no 14th of July, if on the 12th the troops and generals of the King had done

[1] This name so truly French, and already so illustrious from its historical celebrity, has become, if possible, still more respectable, since the Duke Matthieu de Montmorency, to whose conduct Fouché here alludes, has done honour to himself by a public avowal of his fault. The sincerity and nobleness of his conduct as a minister and a statesman have likewise gained him universal esteem. M. Fouché cannot injure the reputation of so respectable a character. The great protector of the old noblesse under the imperial regime, Fouché recriminates here, in order to reproach that very noblesse with its participation in the revolution; it is among the revolutionists a forced recrimination. What he says may be true in some respects; but a small minority of an order is not the whole of it; there will also always be an immense distance between the delusions, imprudences, and faults of 1789, and the dreadful crimes of 1793. Fouché's subtle manner of reasoning, in order to exculpate himself, does not appear to us historically conclusive.—*Note of the French Editor.*

their duty. Besenval was a creature of the Queen's; and Besenval, at the decisive moment, in spite of the King's orders, sounded a retreat, instead of advancing against the insurgents. Marshal Broglie himself was paralyzed by his staff. These are incontrovertible facts.

It is well known by what arts the common people were roused to insurrection. The sovereignty of the people was proclaimed by the defection of the army and the court. Is it surprising, that the factious and their leaders should have got the revolution into their hands? The impulse of innovation, and the exaltation of ideas, did the rest.

The revolution was commenced by a prince who might have mastered it, changing the dynasty, but his cowardice permitted it to proceed at random, and without an object. In the midst of this storm, some generous hearts and enthusiastic spirits, joined with some strong minds, sincerely imagined that a social regeneration was practicable, and, trusting to protestations and oaths, employed themselves in its accomplishment.

It was under these circumstances that we, obscure men of the *tiers-état*, and inhabitants of the provinces, were carried away and seduced by the dreams of liberty, by the intoxicating fiction of the restoration of the state. We pursued a chimera with the fever of the public good; we had, at that time, no secret objects, no ambition, no views of sordid interest.

Opposition, however, soon inflaming the passions, party spirit gave rise to implacable animosities. Everything was carried to extremities. The multitude alone then gave the impulse. For the same reason that Louis XIV. had said, "I am the state," the people said, "We are the sovereign; the nation is the state;"—and the nation went alone.

And here, let us remark a fact which will serve as a key to the events which will follow; for these events approach to the wonderful. The dissentient royalists, and the counter-revolutionists, for want of ready materials for a civil war, and

disappointed of the honours they might have gathered in it, had recourse to emigration, the resource of the weak. Finding no support at home, they ran to seek it abroad. After the example of what other nations had done in similar circumstances, the French nation decreed that the property of the emigrants should be sequestrated, because they had armed against France, and were calling all Europe to arms. But how could the rights of property, the foundation of monarchy, be touched without sapping the basis of the throne? Sequestration led to spoliation; and from that moment the whole mass fell; for the mutation of property is synonymous with the subversion of the established order of things. It was not I who said, "Property must go into other hands!" This sentence was more Agrarian than all that the Gracchi could have uttered, and no Scipio Nasica was found.

From that moment the revolution was nothing but a scene of total disorganization. The terrible sanction of war was wanting to it; and the European cabinets, of their own accord, opened the temple of Janus. From the commencement of this great contest, the revolution, full of youth and ardour, triumphed over the old political system, over a despicable coalition, and over the contemptible operations of its armies and their discord.

Another fact must also be adduced, in order to draw from it an important inference. The first coalition was repulsed, beaten, and humiliated. But let us suppose that it had triumphed over the patriotic confederacy of France; that the arms of the Prussians in Champagne had met with no serious check as far even as the capital; and that the revolution had been disorganized in its very focus: admitting this hypothesis, France would certainly have shared the fate of Poland, by a dismemberment, and by the degradation of its sovereign; for such was at that time the political theme of the cabinets and the spirit of their co-partnership diplomacy. The *progress of knowledge* had not yet introduced the discovery of the European confederacy, of military

occupation, with subsidies. By preserving France, the patriots of 1792 not only rescued her from the hands of foreigners, but laboured, though unintentionally, for the restoration of the monarchy. This is incontestible.

Much outcry has been made against the excesses of this sanguinary revolution. Could it remain calm and temperate when surrounded by enemies and exposed to invasion? Many were mistaken, but few were criminal. The cause of the 10th of August is alone to be ascribed to the advance of the combined Austrians and Prussians. If they came too late, it matters little. The suicide of France was not yet near at hand.

Undoubtedly, the revolution was violent, and even cruel in its progress; all this is historically known, nor shall I dwell upon it, such not being the object of these memoirs. It is of myself I wish to speak, or rather of the events in which I was concerned as a minister of state; but it was necessary that I should introduce the subject and describe the character of the times. Let not the generality of my readers suppose that I shall tediously recite my domestic life as a private individual or obscure citizen. Of what advantage would it be to know the first steps of my career? Minutiæ such as these can only interest the famished compilers of contemporaneous biography, or the gulls who read them; they have nothing to do in common with history, and it is to the dignity of history that my narrative aspires.

My being the son of a shipowner, and having been at first destined for the sea, can be of little consequence; my family was respectable. It is also of little interest to know—that I was brought up among the Pères de l'Oratoire, that I became a member of that College, that I devoted myself to teaching, and that the revolution found me prefect of that college of Nantes; it may, at least, be inferred that I was neither an ignoramus nor a fool. It is, likewise, entirely false that I was ever a priest or had taken orders. I make this remark to show that I was perfectly at liberty to become

a free-thinker or a philosopher without being guilty of apostacy; certain it is that I quitted the oratory before I exercised any public functions, and that, under the sanction of the law, I married at Nantes, with the intention of exercising the profession of an advocate, which was much more consonant to my own inclinations and to the state of society. Besides, I was morally what the age was, with the advantage of being so, neither from imitation nor infatuation, but from reflection and disposition. With such principles, is it no subject of self-congratulation to have been nominated by my fellow-citizens, without the employment either of artifice or intrigue, a representative of the people at the National Convention?

It is in this political defile that your rats of the minister's antechamber wait to attack me. There are no exaggerations, no excesses, no crimes, either in mission or in the tribune, with which they have not loaded my historical responsibility, taking words for actions, and forced speeches for principles; neither taking into the account, time, place, nor circumstance; and making no allowance for a universal delirium, for the republican fever, of which twenty millions of Frenchmen felt the paroxysms.

At first I buried myself in the committee of public instruction, where I became acquainted with Condorcet, and through him with Vergniaud. A circumstance relating to one of the most important crises of my life must here be mentioned. By a singular chance, I had been acquainted with Maximilian Robespierre, at the time I was professor of philosophy in the town of Arras, and had even lent him money, to enable him to take up his abode in Paris when he was appointed deputy to the National Assembly. When we again met at the Convention, we, at first, saw each other frequently; but the difference of our opinions, and perhaps the still greater dissimilarity of our dispositions, soon caused a separation.

One day, at the conclusion of a dinner given at my house,

Robespierre began to declaim with much violence against the Girondins, particularly abusing Vergniaud, who was present. I was much attached to Vergniaud, who was a great orator, and a man of unaffected manners. I went round to him, and advancing towards Robespierre, said to him, "Such violence may assuredly enlist the passions on your side, but will never obtain for you esteem and confidence." Robespierre, offended, left the room; and it will shortly be seen how far this malignant man carried his animosity against me.

I had, however, no share in the political system of the Gironde party, of which Vergniaud was the reputed leader. I thought that the effect of this system would be to disunite France, by stirring up the greater portion of the people of the provinces against Paris. In this I foresaw great danger, being convinced that there was no safety for the state but in the unity and indivisibility of the body politic. This was what induced me to enter a faction whose excesses I inwardly detested, and whose violences marked the progress of the revolution. What horrors were committed in the names of Morality and Justice! But, it must be admitted, we were not sailing in peaceful seas.

The revolution was at its height. We were without rudder, without government, ruled by only one assembly, a species of monstrous dictatorship, the offspring of confusion, and which alternately presented a counterpart of the anarchy of Athens and the despotism of the Ottoman.

It is here, then, that the revolution and the counter-revolution are politically at issue. Is the question to be decided by the laws which regulate the decisions of criminal tribunals? The convention, notwithstanding its internal divisions and its furious decrees, or, perhaps, by those very decrees, saved the country beyond its integral limits. This is an incontestible fact, and, in this respect, I do not deny my participation in its labours. Each of its members, when accused before the tribunal of history, may confine himself

to the limits of Scipio's defence, and say with that great man, "I have saved the republic—let us ascend to the capitol to thank the gods!"

There was, however, one vote which remains unjustifiable; I will even avow, without shame or without weakness, that it has caused me to know remorse. But I call the God of Truth to witness, that it was far less against the monarch that I aimed the blow (for he was good and just) than against the crown, at that time incompatible with the new order of things. I will also add, for direct avowals must now supersede the shadows of disclosure, that it then appeared to me, as to so many others, that we could not inspire the representatives, and the mass of the people, with an energy sufficient to surmount the difficulties of the crisis, but by abandoning everything like moderation, breaking through all restraint, and involving all the leading men of the revolution in its progress. Such was the reason of state which appeared to us to require this frightful sacrifice. In politics, even atrocity itself may sometimes produce a salutary effect.

The world would not now call us to account if the tree of liberty, having taken strong and firm root, had resisted the axe wielded even by those who had planted it with their own hands. That Brutus was more fortunate in erecting the noble edifice which he besprinkled with his children's blood, I can, as a thinking man, conceive; it was far more easy for him to have placed the fasces of the monarchy in the hands of the aristocracy already organized. The representatives of 1793, by sacrificing the representative of royalty, the father of the monarchy, for the purpose of founding a republic, had no choice as to the means of reconstruction. The level of equality was already so violently established in the nation, that the authority was necessarily intrusted to a floating democracy: it could only work upon a moving sand. After having condemned myself as judge and accused, let me, at least, be allowed to avail myself, in the exercise of my conventional duties, of some extenuating circumstances. Being

despatched upon a mission into the departments, forced to employ the language of the times and to yield to the fatality of circumstances, I found myself compelled to put in execution the law against suspected persons. This law ordered the imprisonment, *en masse*, of priests and nobles. The following is what I wrote, the following is what I dared to publish, in a proclamation issued by me, on the 25th of August, 1793 :—

"The law wills that suspected persons should be removed from social intercourse ; this law is commanded by the interests of the state : but, to take for the basis of your opinions vague accusations, proceeding from the vilest passions, would be to favour a tyranny as repugnant to my own heart as it is to natural equity. The sword must not be wielded at random. The law decrees severe punishments, and not proscriptions, as immoral as they are barbarous."

It required at that time some courage to mitigate as much as was in one's power the rigour of the conventional decrees. I was not so fortunate in those missions in which I was only one member of a collective authority, because the power of decision was not intrusted to myself alone. Throughout my missions, the actions which may be considered as deserving of censure will be found far less than the every-day phrases, expressed in the language of the times, and which in a period of greater tranquillity still inspire a kind of dread ; besides, this language was, so to speak, official and established. Let not also my situation at this period be mistaken. I was the delegate of a violent assembly, and I have already proved that I eluded or softened down several of its severe measures. In other respects, these pretended pro-consulates reduced the missionary deputy to be nothing more than a man-machine, the itinerant commissary of the committees of public safety and general security. I was never a member of these government committees ; therefore I never held, during the reign of terror, the helm of power ; on the contrary, as will shortly be seen, I was myself a

sufferer by it. This will prove how much my responsibility was confined.

But let us unwind the thread of these events. Like that of Ariadne, it will conduct us out of the labyrinth ; and we can then attain the object of these memoirs, the sphere of which will increase in importance.

The paroxysm of revolution and of terror was at hand. The guillotine was the only instrument of government. Suspicion and mistrust preyed upon every heart ; fear cowered over all. Even those who held in their hands the instrument of terror, were at times menaced with it. One man alone in the convention appeared to enjoy an inexpugnable popularity : this was Robespierre, a man full of pride and cunning ; an envious, malignant, and vindictive being, who was never satiated with the blood of his colleagues ; and who, by his capacity, steadiness, the clearness of his head, and the obstinacy of his character, surmounted circumstances the most appalling. Availing himself of his preponderance in the committee of public safety, he openly aspired, not only to the tyranny of the decemviri, but to the despotism of the dictatorship of Marius and Sylla. One step more would have given him the masterdom of the revolution, which it was his audacious ambition to govern at his will ; but thirty victims more were to be sacrificed, and he had marked them out in the convention. He well knew that I understood him ; and I, therefore, was honoured by being inscribed upon his tablets at the head of those doomed to destruction. I was still on a mission when he accused me of oppressing the patriots and tampering with the aristocracy. Being recalled to Paris, I dared to call upon him from the tribune, to make good his accusation. He caused me to be expelled from the Jacobins, of whom he was the high-priest ; this was for me equivalent to a degree of proscription.[1] I

[1] After the death of Danton, of Camille-Desmoulins, and other deputies who were seized during the night at their habitations by a mere order of the committees, delivered over to the revolutionary tribunal, tried and con-

did not trifle in contending for my head, nor in long and secret deliberations with such of my colleagues as were threatened with my own fate. I merely said to them, among others to Legendre, Tallien, Dubois de Crancé, Daunou, and Chénier: "You are on the list, you are on the list as well as myself; I am certain of it!" Tallien, Barras, Bourdon de l'Oise, and Dubois de Crancé evinced some energy. Tallien contended for two lives, of which one was then dearer to him than his own: he therefore resolved upon assassinating the future dictator, even in the convention itself. But what a hazardous chance was this! Robespierre's popularity would have survived him, and we should have been immolated to his manes. I therefore dissuaded Tallien from an isolated enterprise, which would have destroyed the man, but preserved his system. Convinced that other means must be resorted to, I went straight to those who shared with Robespierre the government of terror, and whom I knew to be envious or fearful of his immense popularity. I revealed to Collot d'Herbois, to Carnot, to Billaud de Varennes, the designs of the modern Appius, and I presented to each of them separately, so lively and so true a picture of the danger of their situation, I urged them with so much address and good fortune, that I insinuated into their breasts more than mistrust—the courage of henceforth opposing the Tyrant in any further decimating of the convention. "Count the votes," said I to them, "in your committee, and you will see, that when you are determined, he will be reduced to the powerless minority of a Couthon and a St. Just. Refuse him your votes, and compel him to stand alone by your *vis inertiæ*."

demned without being able to defend themselves, Legendre, the friend of Danton, Curtois, Tallien, and above thirty other deputies, never slept at home; they wandered about during the night from one to another, fearful of sharing the same fate as Danton. Fouché was more than two months without having any fixed residence. It was thus that Robespierre made those tremble who seemed desirous of opposing his views to the dictatorship.—*Note by the French Editor.*

But what contrivances, what expedients were necessary to avoid exasperating the Jacobin club, the *Seides*,[1] and the partisans of Robespierre! Sure of having sown the seed, I had the courage to defy him, on the 20th Prairial (June 8, 1794), a day on which, actuated with the ridiculous idea of solemnly acknowledging the existence of the Supreme Being, he dared to proclaim himself both his *will* and *agent*, in presence of all the people assembled at the Tuileries. As he was ascending the steps of his lofty tribune, whence he was to proclaim his manifesto in favour of God, I predicted to him aloud (twenty of my colleagues heard it), that his fall was near. Five days after, in full committee, he demanded my head and that of eight of my friends, reserving to himself the destruction of twenty more at a later period. How great was his astonishment, and what was his rage, upon finding amongst the members of the committee an invincible opposition to his sanguinary designs against the national representation! It has already been too much mutilated, said they to him, and it is high time to put a stop to a deliberate and progressive cutting-down, which at last will include ourselves.

Finding himself in a minority, he withdrew, choked with rage and disappointment, swearing never to set foot again in the committee so long as his will should be opposed. He immediately sent for St. Just, who was with the army, rallied Couthon under his sanguinary banner, and by his influence over the revolutionary tribunal, still made the convention, and all those who were operated on by fear, to tremble. Being confident of the support of the Jacobin club, of Henriot, the commander of the national guard, and of all the revolutionary committees of the capital, he flattered himself that he had still adherents fully sufficient to carry him through. By thus keeping himself at a distance from the

[1] This is an allusion to a character in Voltaire's *Fanatisme*, whose name, Seide, has become synonymous with the satellite of a tyrant, or the devotee of an impostor.—*English Editor.*

den of power, he was desirous of throwing upon his adversaries the general execration of making them appear as the sole perpetrators of so many murders, and of delivering them up to the vengeance of a nation which now began to murmur at the shedding of so much blood. But cowardly, mistrustful, and timid, he was incapable of action, and permitted five weeks to pass away between this secret secession, and the crisis which was silently approaching.

My eye was on him; and seeing him reduced to a single faction, I secretly urged such of his enemies who still clung to the committee, at least to remove the artillery from Paris, who were all devoted to Robespierre and the *Commune*, and to deprive Henriot of his command, or at least to suspend him. The first measure I obtained, thanks to the firmness of Carnot, who alleged the necessity of sending reinforcements of artillery to the army. As to depriving Henriot of his command, that appeared too hazardous; Henriot remained, and was near losing all, or rather, to speak the truth, it was he, who on the 9th Thermidor (27th July) ruined the cause of Robespierre, the triumph of which was for a short time in his power. But what could be expected from a drunken and stupid *ci-devant* footman.

What follows is too well known for me to dwell upon it. It is notorious how Maximilian the First perished; a man whom certain authors have compared to the Gracchi, to whom he bore not the slightest resemblance, either in eloquence or elevation of mind. I confess that in the delirium of victory, I said to those who thought that his views tended to the dictatorship, "You do him too much honour; he had neither plan, nor design: far from disposing of futurity, he was drawn along, and did but obey an impulse he could neither oppose nor govern." But at that time I was too near a spectator of events justly to appreciate their history.

The sudden overthrow of the dreadful system which suspended the nation between life and death, was doubtless a

grand epoch of liberty ; but in this world good is ever mixed with evil. What took place after Robespierre's fall? that which we have seen to have been the case after a fall still more memorable. Those who had crouched most abjectly before the decemvir, could, after his death, find no expression strong enough to express their detestation of him.

It was soon a subject of regret, that so happy an event had not been made to contribute to the public good, instead of serving as a pretext to glut the hatred and vengeance of those who had been sufferers by the revolution. To terror succeeded anarchy, and to anarchy reaction and vengeance. The revolution was blasted both in its principles and end ; the patriots were for a long time exposed to the fury of the assassins, enlisted in companies of the Sun and of Jesus. I had escaped the proscription of Robespierre, but I could not that of the reactors. They pursued me even into the convention, whence, by dint of recriminations and false accusations, they caused my expulsion by a most iniquitous decree ; for nearly a year, I was the victim of every species of insult and odious persecution. It was then I learnt to reflect upon man, and upon the character of factions. I was compelled to wait (for with us there is nothing but extremes)—I was compelled to wait till the cup was full, till the excesses of reaction had placed in jeopardy the revolution itself, and the convention *en masse*. Then, and not till then, the convention saw the abyss which yawned under its feet. The crisis was awful—it was a struggle for life or for death. The convention took up arms ; the persecution of the patriots was stopped, and the cannon of one day (13th Vendémiaire) restored order among the crowd of counter-revolutionists, who had imprudently risen without chiefs and without any centre of object and action.

The cannon of Vendémiaire, directed by Bonaparte, having in some degree restored me to liberty and honour, I confess that I was the more interested in the destiny of this young general, who was clearing for himself a road by

which he was soon to arrive at the most astonishing renown of modern times.

I had still, however, to contend with the severities of a destiny, which did not yet seem inclined to bend and be propitious to me. The establishment of the directorial régime, after this last convulsion, was nothing more than the attempt of a multifarious government, appointed as the directors of a democratical republic of forty millions of souls; for the Rhine and the Alps already formed our natural barrier. This was, indeed, an attempt of the utmost boldness, in presence of the armies of a renewed coalition, formed by inimical governments and disturbers of the common peace. The war, it is true, constituted our strength; but it was sometimes attended with reverses, and it was as yet uncertain which of the two systems, the ancient or modern, would triumph. More seemed to be expected from the capacity of the men entrusted with the direction of affairs, than from the force of events and the effervescence of recent passions: too many vices discovered themselves. The regulation of our home affairs had also its embarrassments. It was with difficulty that the directorial government endeavoured to open itself a safe road between two active and hostile factions—that of the demagogues, who only considered our temporary magistrates as oligarchs to be replaced,—and that of the auxiliary royalists abroad, who, unable to strike a decisive blow, fanned in the southern and western provinces the embers of civil war. The directory, however, like every new government, which almost always possesses the advantage of being gifted with activity and energy, procured fresh resources, and brought back victory to the armies, stifling at the same time intestine war. But the directory saw, perhaps with too much inquietude, the proceedings of the demagogues;—it was alarmed because they had their focus in Paris, under its own eyes,—and because they associated with all the dissatisfied patriots in their hatred to all organized power. This twofold difficulty,

which might have been easily avoided, caused a deviation in the policy of the directory. It abandoned the revolutionists, an order of men to which it owed its existence, and preferred favouring those cameleons, devoid of character and integrity—the instruments of power, so long as it can make itself respected, and its enemies the moment it begins to totter. We saw five men, invested with the supreme power, and who in the convention had rendered themselves conspicuous for the energy of their votes, keep back their former colleagues, caress the mongrels (*métis*) and royalists, and adopt a system quite the reverse of that to which they owed their political existence.

Thus, under the republican government, of which I was a founder, I was, if not proscribed, at least in complete disgrace, obtaining neither employment, respect, nor interest, and sharing this unaccountable disfavour for nearly three years, with a great number of my former colleagues, men of approved abilities and patriotism. If I at length made my way, it was by the assistance of a particular event, and of a change of system brought about by the force of circumstances. This deserves being particularized.

Of all the members of the directory, Barras was the only one who was accessible to his former, but now neglected, colleagues; he had, and deserved, the reputation of possessing an amiability, candour, and generosity peculiar to the people of the South. Without being well versed in politics, he had resolution and a certain tact. The exaggerated reflections upon his manners and his moral principles was precisely what drew around him a court which swarmed with blood-suckers, male and female. He was at this time Carnot's rival; and only maintained himself in the public opinion by the idea that, in case of need, he would at once "to horse," braving, as on the 13th Vendémiaire, every hostile effort; he also affected the manners of the prince of the republic, went hunting, and kept his hounds, his courtiers, and his mistresses. I had

known him both before and after the catastrophe of Robespierre, and I had remarked that the justice of my reflections and presentiments had struck him: I had a secret interview with him, through the medium of Lombard-Taradeau, a man from the South, like himself, and one of his boon-companions and confidants. This was during the first difficulties of the directory, at that time struggling with the Babœuf faction. I imparted my ideas to Barras; he himself desired me to draw them up in a memorial; this I did, and transmitted it to him. The position of the directory was therein politically considered, and its dangers enumerated with precision. I described the faction Babœuf, which had dropt the mask before me; and showed Barras that, while raving about the Agrarian law, its real object was to surprise and seize by assault the directory and the supreme power, which would again have plunged us into the hands of the demagogy through terror and bloodshed. My memorial had its effect; the evil was eradicated. Barras then offered me a second-rate place, which I refused, unwilling to obtain employments, except by the main road. He assured me that he had not sufficient interest to promote me, that his efforts to overcome the prejudices of his colleagues against me had been ineffectual. A coolness succeeded, and all was deferred.

In the interval an opportunity presented itself of rendering myself independent as far as fortune was concerned. I had sacrificed my profession and my existence to the revolution; and by an effect of the most unjust prejudices, the field of advancement was closed against me. My friends pressed me to follow the example of several of my former colleagues, who, finding themselves in the same case with myself, had obtained, through the patronage of the directors, shares in the government contracts (*fournitures*). A company was formed; I was admitted into it, and by the influence of Barras I obtained a share of the contracts.[1]

[1] There is always a certain degree of artifice even in what Fouché

I thus commenced making my fortune, after the example of Voltaire, and I contributed to that of my partners, who distinguished themselves by the punctuality with which they fulfilled the clauses of their contract with the republic. I was myself the manager, and in this new sphere found myself enabled to assist more than once many worthy but neglected patriots. Affairs, however, still grew worse at home. The directory confounded the mass of the revolutionists with demagogues and anarchists; and these latter were not punished without the former coming in for their share. Public opinion was permitted to take the most erroneous direction. The reins of government were in the hands of the republicans; and they had opposed to them the passions and prejudices of an impetuous but superficial nation, which obstinately persisted in viewing citizens zealous in the cause of liberty, as sanguinary men and terrorists. The directory itself, carried away by the torrent of prejudice, could not continue in the prudent track which might have maintained and strengthened it. The public opinion was daily more and more falsified and perverted by servile writers, by pamphleteers in the pay of the emigrants and of foreign powers, openly recommending the destruction of the new institutions: the task allotted them was to vilify the republicans and the heads of the state. By permitting itself to be thus disgraced and dishonoured, the directory, whose members were divided amongst themselves by a spirit of rivalry and ambition, lost all the advantages which a representative government offers to those who have ability enough to direct it. What was the consequence? At the very moment our armies were everywhere victorious—when, masters of the Rhine, we were achieving the conquest of Italy in the name of the revolution and the republic—the

allows. Let us however give him credit for having spoken truth, as much as it was possible for him to do; it is not a little to have obtained his avowal of having commenced his fortune by jobbing in the contracts. It will be seen likewise, in the course of his memoirs, whence he drew his immense riches at a later period.—*Note of the French Editor.*

republican spirit languished at home, and the result of the elections terminated in favour of the counter-revolutionists and the royalists. A great schism became inevitable, as soon as the majority of the two councils declared against the majority of the directory. A kind of triumvirate had been formed, composed of Barras, Rewbel, and Reveillère-Lepaux; three men inadequate to their functions in so important a crisis. They at length perceived that the only support left them was the cannon and the bayonet, so that at the risk of arousing the ambition of the generals, they were compelled to call in the armies to their assistance; another serious danger, but one which, not being so immediate, was less anticipated. It was then that Bonaparte, the conqueror of Lombardy and the vanquisher of Austria, formed a club in each division of his army, invited the soldiers to discuss the politics of the day, represented to them the two councils as traitors sold to the enemies of France, and after having made his army swear upon the altar of their country to exterminate the *brigands modérés*, poured threatening addresses into all the departments, as well as into the capital. In the north, the army did not confine itself to deliberation and the signing of addresses. Hoche, general-in-chief of the army of Sambre-et-Meuse, despatched arms and ammunition on the road to Paris, and marched his troops upon the neighbouring towns. Through some secret means, this movement was suddenly suspended; either because there was not a perfect understanding upon the mode of attacking the two councils, or because, as I have great reason to believe, the object was to procure the conqueror of Italy a more exclusive influence in the direction of affairs. It is certain that the interests of Bonaparte were at that time supported by Barras in the directorial triumvirate, and that the gold of Italy flowed like a new Pactolus into the Luxembourg. Women took an active part in affairs; they at this time conducted all political intrigues.

On the 4th of September (18th Fructidor), a military movement placed the capital in subjection. This bold manœuvre was executed by Augereau, Bonaparte's lieutenant, expressly sent for the purpose. As it always happens in those popular commotions in which the soldiery interferes, the toga yielded to the sword. Two directors, fifty-three deputies, and a great number of authors and printers of periodical journals who had perverted the public opinion, were banished without any form of trial. The elections of forty-nine departments were declared null, and the administrative authorities were suspended previous to being reorganized in the spirit of the new revolution.

In this manner the royalists were vanquished and dispersed without a blow, by the mere appearance of the military; in this manner the popular societies were reorganized; thus it was that a stop was put to the reaction upon the republicans; and thus the appellation of republican and patriot was no longer a cause for exclusion from places and honours. As to the directory, in which Merlin de Douai and François de Neufchâteau replaced Carnot and Barthélemy, who were both included in the number of the exiles, it at first acquired some appearance of energy and power; but in reality it was only a fictitious power, incapable of resisting troubles or reverses.

Thus, the only remedy for evil was violence; an example the more perilous, as it endangered the future.

Previously to the 18th Fructidor, a day which seemed destined to decide the fate of the revolution, I had not remained idle. The advice I gave the director Barras, my calculations, my prophetic words, had contributed in no small degree to impart to the directorial triumvirate that watchfulness and stimulus which its gropings and irresolutions demanded. Was it not natural that an event so favourable to the interests of the revolution should also turn to the advantage of those men who had founded

and preserved it by their intelligence and their energy?[1] Hitherto the path of the patriots had been strewn with thorns: it was time that the tree of liberty should produce sweeter fruits for those who were to gather and enjoy them; it was time that the high places of the state should devolve upon men of superior abilities.

Let us conceal nothing; we had rid ourselves of the coalition, of the scourge of the civil war, and of the still more dangerous manœuvres of the cameleons at home. Now, by our energy, and the force of circumstances, we were masters of the state and of every branch of power. There only remained to ensure an entire possession of power, that it should be distributed by the scale of capacity alone: when power is once possessed, the only skill necessary is that which will best keep it. Every other theory at the conclusion of a revolution is but folly, or impudent hypocrisy; this doctrine will be found in the hearts of those even who dare not avow it. As an experienced man, I declared those trivial truths, till then regarded as a state secret.[2] My reasons were appreciated: the application of them alone caused embarrassment. Intrigue did much; a salutary activity the rest. Soon a soft shower of secretaryships, ministeries, commissariats, legations, embassies, secret missions, and commands of military divisions, came, like the manna from heaven, to quench the thirst of the *élite* of my former colleagues. The patriots, so long neglected, were now provided for. I was one of the first in seniority, and my worth was well known. I, however, resolutely refused the subaltern favours which were offered me; I was determined to accept of none but an employment of consequence sufficient to introduce me at once into the career of the highest political affairs. I had

[1] An invaluable confession, explaining at once the *motives of every revolution*, past, present, and to come.—*Note of the French Editor.*

[2] As far as I know, none of the heads of the revolution have ever as yet said so much. Fouché is really candid in his avowals.—*Note of the French Editor.*

the patience to wait; and indeed waited long, but not in vain. This once, Barras overcame the prejudices of his colleagues, and I was nominated, in the month of September, 1798, not without many previous steps and interviews, Ambassador of the French Republic to the Cisalpine Republic. It is well known, that for this new and analogous creation, we were indebted to the victorious arms and fine policy of Bonaparte. Austria, however, was to be indemnified by the sacrifice of Venice.

By the treaty of peace of Campo Formio (a village of Frioul, near Udine), Austria had ceded the Pays Bas to France; and Milan, Mantua, and Modena, to the Cisalpine Republic: she had reserved to herself the greatest part of the Venetian states, with the exception of the Ionian Isles, which France retained. It was evident that whilst we thus built one house, we provided the connecting stones of another edifice; not to stop in so fair a course, we already spoke of revolutionizing all Italy. In the meantime, the treaty of Campo Formio served to consolidate the new republic, the extent of which was respectable. It was composed of Austrian Lombardy, the Modenese, Massa and Carrara, the Bolognese, Ferrarese, Romania, Bergama, Brescia, Cremona, and other possessions of the Venetian state on the continent. Already matured, it demanded its emancipation; that is to say, instead of languishing under the severe guardianship of the French directory, to live under the protection and influence of the great nation. In fact, we were more in want of valiant and sincere allies than of submissive vassals. Such was my opinion, and likewise those of the director Barras and of general Brune, at that time commander-in-chief of the army of Italy; and who had just removed his headquarters from Berne to Milan. But another director, whose system of policy and diplomacy was that of kicks and cuffs, insisted that all, both friends and foes, were to be subjected by power and violence; this was Rewbel, of Colmar, a harsh and vain man; he conceived

there was much dignity in his view of the subject. He shared the weight of important affairs with his colleague Merlin de Douai, an excellent juris-consult, but a poor statesman ; both these led the directory, for Treilhard and Rèveillere-Lepaux were humble followers of their colleagues. If Barras, who played a game of his own, sometimes obtained an advantage over them, it was by dexterity, and the good opinion they entertained of him ; they thought him a man of sufficient nerve to be always ready for a *coup de main.*

But we had now recovered from the intoxication of victory. My initiation into state affairs took place at so important a crisis, that it will be necessary to give a sketch of its prominent features ; especially as it is a preliminary absolutely indispensable for the clearer comprehension of what follows. In less than one year, the peace of Campo Formio, which had so much deceived the credulous, was already sapped to its basis. Stopping at nothing, we had made a dreadful abuse of the right of the stronger in Helvetia, at Rome, and in the East. For want of kings to attack, we had made war upon the shepherds of Switzerland, and had even started the Mamelukes as our game. It was the expedition into Egypt, in particular, which re-opened all our wounds. The origin of that expedition is sufficiently curious to be noted here. Bonaparte held our multifarious government in horror, and despised the directory, which he called the five kings in routine (*cinq rois à terme*). Intoxicated with glory upon his return from Italy, welcomed with almost frantic joy by the French, he meditated seizing upon the supreme government ; but his party had not as yet sufficiently established itself. He perceived, and I use his own expression, that *the pear was not yet ripe.* On its side, the directory, who feared him, found that the nominal command of the English expedition kept him too near Paris ; and he himself was not much inclined to seek his destruction against the cliffs of Albion.

To say the truth, it was scarcely known what to do with him. Open disgrace would have insulted the public opinion, and increased his strength.

An expedient was thus being sought for, when the ex-bishop of Autun, a man distinguished for his shrewdness and address, and whom the intriguing daughter of Necker had just introduced into the foreign department, conceived the brilliant ostracism into Egypt. He first insinuated the idea to Rewbel, then to Merlin, taking upon himself to obtain the acquiescence of Barras. His plan was nothing but an old idea which he had found amongst the dust of the bureau. It was converted into a state affair. The expedient appeared the more fortunate, as it at once removed the bold and forward general; subjecting him, at the same time, to hazardous chance. The conqueror of Italy at first entered unhesitatingly, and with the greatest ardour, into the idea of an expedition, which not only could not fail adding to his renown, but would also ensure to him distant possessions, which he flattered himself he should govern either as a sultan or a prophet. But soon cooling, whether he perceived the snare, or whether he still aimed at supreme power, he drew back; but it was in vain for him to struggle, to raise obstacle upon obstacle—all were removed; and when he found himself reduced to the alternative of a disgrace, or of remaining at the head of an army which might revolutionize the East, he deferred his designs upon Paris, and set sail with the flower of our troops.

The expedition commenced with a kind of miracle, the sudden taking of Malta; and was succeeded by the fatal catastrophe, of the destruction of our squadron at the mouth of the Nile. The face of affairs immediately changed. England, in its turn, was in the delirium of triumph. In conjunction with Russia, she set on foot a new general war, of which the government of the two Sicilies was the ostensible cause. The torch of war was lighted at Palermo and Naples by hatred; at Constantinople by a violation of

the rights of peace, and of nations. The Turk alone had justice on his side.

So many untoward circumstances coming fast upon each other, produced a deep impression at Paris; it seemed that the political horizon again became cloudy. Open preparations were made for war, and everything assumed a threatening aspect. The rich had already been subjected to a forced and progressive loan of forty-eight millions, with which levies were enabled to be raised. From this time may be dated the idea and establishment of the military conscription, an immense lever which had been borrowed from Austria, improved and proposed to the councils by Jourdan, and immediately adopted, by the placing in active service two hundred thousand conscripts. The armies of Italy and Germany were reinforced. All the preliminaries of war burst forth at once :—insurrection in the Scheld and the Deux Nethes, at the gates of Malines and Bruxelles; troubles at Mantua, and at Voghera; Piedmont on the eve of a convulsion; Geneva and Milan torn by the contending factions, and inflamed by the republican fever, with which our revolution had inoculated them.

It was surrounded by this gloomy prospect, that I set forward on my embassy to Milan. I arrived at the very moment when General Brune was about to effect, in the Cisalpine government, without an essential alteration, a change of individuals, the key to which change was in my possession. The object was, to remove the power into the hands of men possessing greater energy and firmness, and to commence the emancipation of the younger republic, in order that it might communicate the impulse to the whole of Italy. We premeditated this *coup de main*, with the hope of forcing into acquiescence the majority of the directory, which held its sittings at the Luxembourg.[1]

[1] Fouché does not give us sufficient information respecting this plan of revolutionizing all the countries abroad, a plan at that time discarded by the majority of the directory, and of which General Augereau was one of

I concerted measures with Brune, I encouraged the most ardent of the Lombardian patriots, and we decided that the movement should be put in execution, and that there should neither be proscriptions nor violence. On the morning of the 22nd of October, a military demonstration was made; the gates of Milan were closed; the directors and deputies were at their posts. There, by the simple impulse of opinion, under the protection of the French troops, and at the suggestion of the general-in-chief, fifty-two Cisalpine representatives send in their resignations, and are replaced by others. At the same time, the three directors, Adelasio, Luosi, and Soprensi, chosen by the ex-ambassador Trouvé, and confirmed by the French Directory, were likewise invited to resign, and replaced by three other directors, Brunetti, Sabatti, and Sinancini. Citizen Porro, a Lombardian patriot, full of zeal and intelligence, was appointed minister of police. This repetition of our 18th of Fructidor, so easily effected, was confirmed by the primary assemblies; thus we rendered homage to the sovereignty of the people, by obtaining its sanction to the measures adopted for its welfare. Soprensi, the ex-director, with twenty-two deputies, came to place their protests in my hands; all my endeavours to soothe them were useless. It became

the first victims. Commander-in-chief of the army of Germany, after the 18th Fructidor, he was about to revolutionize Suabia, when he was recalled and disgraced. Bonaparte had part in this, and was furious because they were already attempting to demolish his work, the peace of Campo Formio. After his departure for Egypt, Brune and Joubert will be seen to share the disgrace of Augereau, on the same account. This plan, which seemed to be a renewal of the *propagandum* in 1792, appears to have had no other adherent in the directory than Barras; this was but a weak support. Rewbel and Merlin did not like to proceed so precipitately in the affair; already alarmed at their excesses in Egypt and Switzerland, they persisted in lulling themselves in a situation which was neither that of peace nor war. It must be owned, that the bold attempt of universal revolutionizing, which they only dared to attempt by halves, would have given the revolutionists of France the great advantage of choice, with regard to the operations of the campaign of 1799, which turned against them at home and abroad. The revolution stopped, and assumed a more masculine character.—*Note of the French Editor.*

necessary to issue an order for removing Soprensi by force from the apartments he occupied at the directorial palace; and I was compelled to receive from him a fresh protest, the purport of which was, that he denied the general-in-chief had the right which he had arrogated over the Cisalpine authorities. Here the opposition ended—we surmounted every difficulty without noise or violence. It may be supposed, that the couriers were not idle; the ex-deputies, and the malcontents, had recourse to the directory of Paris, to which they appealed.

I, on my part, despatched an account of the changes of the 20th of October, dwelling particularly upon the experienced judgment of the general-in-chief, the justice of his views, the example which France had itself given on the 18th of Fructidor, and the still more recent one, when the directory found itself under the necessity of annulling the elections of several departments, in order to remove several obnoxious meddling or dangerous deputies. I then launched into more important considerations, invoking the terms and the spirit of the alliance entered into between the French and the Cisalpine republics, a treaty approved by the council of ancients on the 7th of March preceding. In this treaty the new republic was explicitly acknowledged as a free and independent power, upon these conditions only, that she should take part in all our wars; that she should set on foot all her forces, at the requisition of the French directory; that she should support twenty-five thousand of the French troops, by providing an annual fund of ten millions for that object; and finally, that all her armaments should be under the command of our generals. I guaranteed the strict and faithful execution of this treaty, in assuring the directory, that the government and the welfare of this nation would find a more certain pledge, and a still firmer support, in the energy and sincerity of the men to whom the power had just been entrusted; finally, I rested upon my instructions, which authorized me to reform

without tumult or violence the vices of the new Cisalpine government, the excessive and expensive numbers of the members of the legislative body, the administrations of the departments; and which directed me to take care that the form of the republican government should not be oppressive to the people. From that I proceeded to guarantee also the existence of immense resources; the legislative body of Milan having authorized the directory to sell thirty millions of national domains, in which was included the property of the bishops. The despatch of General Brune, the general-in-chief, perfectly coincided with mine; but all was useless. Pride and vanity, as well as the lowest intrigues, and even foreign insinuations, interfered in the affair. Besides, the object was now to solve one of the highest questions of immediate policy, that is, the adoption or rejection of the system of the unity of Italy divided into republics, effected by the sudden overthrow of the old rotten governments, already tottering, and incapable of supporting themselves, a system, the triumph of which would, we thought, redound to our honour.[1] This nervous and decisive policy was not to the taste of the wary minister who at that time was at the head of our foreign affairs[2]; he employed indirect means to ruin our plan, and he succeeded. Rewbel and Merlin, whose vanity was brought into play, inveighed loudly against the affair of Milan; we had only on our side the single vote of Barras, which was soon neutralized. A decree made *ab irato*, on the 25th of October, formally disavowed the alterations effected by General Brune. At the same time the directory signified to me its disapprobation, informing me that it

[1] Very well, M. Fouché. History will take notice of the declaration of your system of 1798. Since you are a man of such veracity, you will doubtless give us fresh proofs that this system, which was only modified *by the force of circumstances*, was perpetuated even to 1815, the period of your last coming into power.—*French Editor.*

[2] Here personal designation is unnecessary. The reader has but to refer to the almanacs. We ought to respect the discretion of the Duke d'Otranto towards one of his ancient colleagues.—*French Editor.*

would have much satisfaction in seeing all the ex-directors and deputies reinstated in their places.

I could easily have exculpated myself in this affair, in which I was thought not to have taken a direct part, having arrived at my post at the commencement of the preparations, of which, in strictness, I could neither know the origin nor the object. Such would have been the conduct of a man anxious to preserve his situation at the expense of his opinion and honour. I adopted a more candid and firmer mode of proceeding. I protested warmly against the disapprobation of the directory; I pointed out the danger of retrograding, the will of the people having openly declared itself in the primary assemblies, so as to render it impossible to undo what had been done, without the risk of being guilty of the most blameable frivolity and inconsistency. I also observed how impolitic it would be to displease the Cisalpine patriots, and to risk exasperating that republic at the very moment when the hostilities, on the eve of commencing against Naples, could not fail to be the prelude to a general war. I announced to the directory that thirty thousand Austrians were assembling on the Adige; but I was preaching to the winds. Brune, upon receiving the decree of the directory which annulled the alterations made on the 20th of October, received also instructions to leave the army of Italy, and to proceed to take the command in Holland. He was fortunately replaced by the brave, modest, and loyal Joubert, particularly qualified to calm and remedy everything.

Milan was in a state of fermentation, and the two rival factions found themselves again opposed to each other; the one full of hope of being re-established, and the other fully determined to resist strongly; when a new decree from the directory reached me, bearing date the 7th of November. It refused to acknowledge the will of the people, and ordered me to break off all relations with the Cisalpine directory till it had been reorganized such as it was previous to the 20th of October. The directory likewise ordered a new convoca-

tion of the primary assemblies : I was much shocked at this contempt of the republican principles, upon which our own constitution had been founded. The servile, vexatious system by which a republic, our ally, was to be governed, appeared to me the height of imbecility. In the midst of the serious circumstances in which the Italian peninsula was about to be placed, it was nothing less than degrading men and reducing them to the situation of mere machines ; it was besides diametrically opposite to the stipulations and the spirit of the treaty of alliance. I explained myself ; I did more, I, in some degree, vindicated the majesty of the two nations, by addressing to the Cisalpine directory a message, of which the following are the principal heads :—

" Vain, citizen directors, is the attempt to infer that your political existence is transitory, because it has been accompanied by an act justly disapproved of, and strongly condemned, by my government. (Here a palliative was necessary.) Your fellow-citizens, by giving it their sanction in your primary assemblies, have given you a moral power for which you become responsible to the Cisalpine people.

" Proudly, then, assert its independence, and your own ; hold with firmness the reins of government which are intrusted to you, without being embarrassed by the perfidious suggestions of calumny ; make your authority respected by a powerful and well-organized police ; oppose the malignity of passions by displaying a majesty of character, and confound all the machinations of your enemies by an inflexible justice.

" We are always desirous of giving peace to the world ; but if vanity and the thirst of blood cause arms to be wielded against your independence—woe to the traitors ! Their dust shall be spurned by the feet of freemen.

" Citizen directors ! elevate your minds with events ; be superior to them if you wish to command them ; be not uneasy about the future ; the strength of republics consists in the nature of things ; victory and liberty shall pervade the world.

"Direct the ardent activity of your fellow-citizens, in order to render it productive. . . . Let them learn that energy is not delirium, and that the independence of liberty does not consist in acting wrong."

But the Italian character was little capable of appreciating these precepts. I everywhere sought for a firmness tempered by constancy, and with few exceptions, I found nothing but wavering and pusillanimous hearts.

Enraged at such language, addressed to the Cisalpine republic, our routine sovereigns (*souverains à terme*) sitting in the Luxembourg, despatched, in all haste, to Milan, the citizen Rivaud, in quality of commissioner-extraordinary; he was the bearer of a decree, ordering me to quit Italy. I paid no attention to it, persuaded that the directory had not the right to prevent me residing as a private individual at Milan. A sympathetic conformity of opinions and ideas with Joubert, who had replaced Brune in his command, induced me to remain there to await the events which were in preparation. From the first interviews we had together, we understood each other perfectly. He was, without doubt, the most intrepid, the most able, and the most estimable of all Bonaparte's lieutenants; since the peace of Campo Formio he had favoured the popular cause in Holland; he had come into Italy, resolved, notwithstanding the false policy of the directory, to follow his own inclination, and to satisfy the wishes of the people, who anxiously desired liberty. I strongly urged him not to compromise himself on my account, but to temporize. The commissary Rivaud, not daring to undertake anything while I remained at Milan, informed his constituents of the Luxembourg of his situation, and the next courier was the bearer of thundering despatches.

The military authority was compelled to act, whether willingly or not. In the night of the 7—8th of December, the guard of the directory and of the legislative body was disarmed, and replaced by French troops. The people were

not allowed to enter the palace where the directory and the two councils assembled. A secret committee was held during the night; and on its breaking up, the new functionaries were displaced to make way for the former ones. Seals were placed upon the doors of the constitutional Circle, and he commissioner Rivaud ordered several arrests. I think that I myself should have been arrested, ironed, and passed from brigade to brigade up to Paris, had not Joubert apprized me in time. I secreted myself in a country house, near Monza, where I soon received a copy of the proclamation addressed by citizen Rivaud to the Cisalpine republic. In this disgraceful monument of political absurdity, the irregularity and violence of the proceedings of the 20th of November were alleged, and condemned on account of their having been promoted by the military power; a most ridiculous accusation, since it equally condemned the 18th Fructidor, and the late and humiliating scene at Milan, acted by orders sent from Paris, without any previous knowledge of the state of affairs. This patriot of a commissioner, in enigmatical terms, taxed Brune and myself with being innovators and reformers, without character or mission; in short, he exposed the excess of our patriotism, which, he said, caused the popular government to be calumniated.

All this was truly contemptible, and without any appearance of reason. Being informed that I had disappeared, and thinking that I was concealed in Milan, the directory again despatched an extraordinary courier, the bearer of a fresh order for my expulsion from Italy. "If you are aware," wrote immediately poor Rivaud to the Cisalpine directory, "that citizen Fouché is on your territory, I beg you will give me information accordingly." I smiled at his perplexity, and at the alarms of both directories; then quitting my retreat, calmly took the road to the Alps, which I crossed. I arrived at Paris in the beginning of January, 1799. The credit and influence of Rewbel and Merlin were already considerably

on the decline. Intrigues were being formed against them in both councils, and they began to lower their lofty tone. Therefore, instead of calling me to their bar, and making me give an account of my conduct, they contented themselves with announcing in their official journal, that I had returned from my mission to the Cisalpine republic. I now thought myself sufficiently strong to call them to an account for their vindictive proceedings towards me; and insisted upon indemnities for my removal from Milan, which I received, accompanied with an earnest request not to make any noise about it.

I thought these details, upon my first failure in an important political mission, necessary for the better understanding of the state of the public mind at this period, and to acquaint the reader with the ground upon which I had to commence my operations. I had, besides, already penned this *exposé* by desire of Bonaparte, on the eve of his departure for Marengo; and I own that, upon re-perusing it, recollections were brought to mind which gave me no small degree of satisfaction.

I found the directorial authority shaken, less by the expectations of public disasters, than by the underhand machinations of discontented factions, who, without throwing off the mask, carried on their attacks in secret.

The public testified itself generally disgusted with the narrow and paltry spirit which actuated our five routine kings (*Rois à termes*); people were indignant that their authority was only made known by exactions, injustice, and incapacity. By rousing the dormant passions they provoked resistance. A few confidential interviews with men who either possessed influence, or exercised their powers of observation, and my own reflections, enabled me to form a right judgment of the state of things.

Everything announced important events and an approaching crisis. The Russians advanced, and were preparing to enter the lists. The government grew tired of

sending note after note to Austria, to endeavour to stop their progress; and, towards the end of February, the war signal was sounded, without our being in a state to enter the field. The directory had provoked this second coalition, and at the same time deprived itself of its best generals. Not only Bonaparte was as it were an exile in the sands of Africa—not only Hoche, escaped from the Irish expedition, had ended his days by poison—Pichegru was banished to Sinnamary—Moreau was in disgrace—Bernadotte, who had retired from the diplomacy, after the failure of his embassy to Vienna, had resigned his command of the army of observation. But even the removal of Championnet was decreed, for having wished to put a stop to the rapacity of the agents of the directory. In short, Joubert himself, the brave and virtuous Joubert, had received his dismissal, on account of his desire of establishing in Italy a wholesome liberty, which would have drawn still closer together the ties that united the two nations, whose destinies appeared to be the same.

This second continental war, of which Switzerland, Italy, and Egypt had only seen the prelude, commenced on the 1st of March; and by the 20th, Jourdan had lost the battle of Stockach, which forced him to repass the Rhine in the greatest precipitation: this gloomy omen was soon followed by the breaking up of the Congress of Rastadt, a political drama, the last act of which was full of horrors. We were not more fortunate in Italy than in Germany: Schœrer, Rewbel's favourite general, lost three battles on the Adige; these deprived us, in a few days, of the liberty of Italy, together with the conquests which had cost us three laborious campaigns. Till then we had either invaded or resisted with firmness: the effect produced by the intelligence that we were retreating on all sides may easily be imagined; every government, which, during a revolution, can only make malcontents, and whose arms are unsuccessful, must necessarily lose its power: upon the first

reverses, all the ambitious reassume of course an hostile attitude.

I was present at several meetings of the discontented deputies and generals, and I concluded that, in reality, the parties had not all the same intentions, but that they met for the common purpose of overturning the directory, in order to be able afterwards to further their own views. I set Barras right upon this subject, and prevailed upon him to effect, at any cost, the expulsion of Rewbel, being very sure that we should afterwards very easily subdue Treilhard, Merlin, and Reveillère. These two last were particularly disliked, for having favoured the system of the electoral divisions, the object of which was to keep out of the legislative councils the most ardent republicans. I was aware that Joseph and Lucien, Bonaparte's brothers, intrusted by him to watch over his interests during his warlike exile, were manœuvring with the same intentions. Lucien displayed an exalted patriotism; he was at the head of a party of disaffected with Boulay de la Meurthe. Joseph, on his side, lived at a great expense, and kept a magnificent establishment. His house was the rendezvous of the most powerful deputies of the councils, the highest functionaries, the most distinguished of the generals, and the women whose minds were most fertile in expedients and intrigue.

The coalition being formed, Rewbel, disconcerted and abandoned by Merlin, to whom he was represented as the scape-goat to be sacrificed, thought himself too fortunate to bargain for his withdrawing from the directory, under the appearance of the lot having fallen upon him;[1] the prin-

[1] The directors were elected by the council of ancients, from a list of fifty candidates, presented to them by the Council of Five hundred. It is well known that, at every session of the legislative body, one of the five *thrones* of the directory became vacant; then lots were cast to know which of the five members should come out. It seems that, on these occasions, the power of parties was sufficient to make the lot fall upon the individual who was obnoxious to them.

Thus it is reported, that when Letourneur, who was replaced by Barthélemy, nephew of the celebrated writer of that name, vacated his seat, it

cipal condition was, that his retreat in the council of ancients should be respected. But who was to fill his place in the directory? Merlin, and the other *Ventrus*[1] deputies, his creatures, determined upon appointing in his stead Duval, of the Seine Inferieure, a man of humble talents, and without influence, in other respects a worthy person; he at that time filled the office of minister of police, but was too short-sighted for his post. They were permitted to go on quietly, and all their measures being taken, every effort was made in favour of Sieyes, the ambassador at Berlin, whose concealed abilities had been the theme of praise for the last ten years. I knew him to possess some strong and decided revolutionary opinions, but I also knew that his disposition was suspicious and artful; I also believed that he cherished sentiments but little compatible with the basis of our liberties and institutions. I was not for him; but I belonged to the coterie which so suddenly formed in his favour, without my being able to conjecture from what motive. It was urged that it was necessary to have at the head of affairs, upon the commencement of a threatening coalition, a man who of all others knew how to keep Prussia in a neutrality so advantageous to her; it was even asserted that he had shown himself an experienced politician, by giving the first hints of the coalition. The election commenced: I still smile when I recollect the disappointment of the subtle Merlin and of that poor Duval, his creature, who, whilst the council were proceeding in the election, having established a telegraphic line of agents from the Hotel de Police to the Legislative Hall, whose duty it was to transmit to the happy

was announced, the day before, in one of the papers (*l'ami des lois*), that the lot should fall on him. The same trick was played with regard to Rewbel, who was glad thus to disguise his retreat; he was immediately after elected member of the council of ancients.—*Note of the English Editor.*

[1] The members of the council, who adhered to Merlin's party, were thus nicknamed; the same epithet recurs in the following page, in which Fouché mentions the defections of this party.—*English Editor.*

candidate the intelligence of his having been raised to the directorial dignity, learned from them that a part of the *ventre* had deserted. Neither Merlin nor Duval could possibly comprehend how a *certain* majority could be suddenly transformed into a minority. But we, who knew the secret spring of these operations, often amused ourselves with the affair, at those excellent dinners in which politics were discussed.

Merlin saw in Sieyes a dangerous competitor, and, from that moment, looked upon him with an evil eye. As to poor Duval, having soon after been replaced by Bourguignon, he turned misanthrope. These two inferior citizens were neither of them fitted to direct the police.[1] The work was as yet only in embryo. In order to bring it to perfection two legislative coalitions were formed. In one were Boulay de la Meurthe, Chénier, Francais de Nantes, Chalmel, Texier-Olivier, Berlier, Baudin des Ardennes, Cabanis, Regnier, the two Bonapartes; in the other Bertrand du Calvados, Poulain-Grandprè, Destrem, Garrau, Arena, Salicetti, and several other vigorous athletæ. In both these, which had their auxiliaries without, I gained over several to Barras, while he on his side manœuvred tolerably well. Underhand means were the only ones that could be employed at first: the time for throwing off the mask was not yet come.

In this respect, our reverses served us admirably; they were inevitable. Could one hundred and sixty thousand men, exhausted and worn out with fatigue, dispirited by repeated defeats, and commanded by generals always liable to be disgraced, make head against more than three hundred thousand enemies, seconded, in Italy and Germany, by the people, and brought, either by the ardour of victory, or

[1] A little vanity of Fouché's, who prepares everything in the style of a melodrame, in order to introduce himself upon the stage as alone capable of guiding the police helm, of turning to the best advantage his dark intrigues and immense perquisites.—*French Editor.*

the desire of vengeance, upon the frontiers even of the republic?

The dissatisfaction with the majority of the directory soon became general: "It has only," as was observed, "displayed its authority in oppression, injustice, and incapacity: instead of signalizing its dictatorship by some brilliant action, since the 18th Fructidor it has but abused its immense power; it has ruined our finances, and dug the abyss which now threatens to swallow the republic."

It was now only in the councils that the directory could still find defenders amongst the creatures in its interest, and its unskilful apologists. The exasperation was at its height, when Bailleul wrote in a pamphlet that he feared more the Russians in the legislative body than the Russians approaching the frontiers.

A concerted message, addressed to the directory, requiring information upon the situation of the republic abroad and at home, became the signal for battle. It was at the moment when Sieyes, the new director, had just been installed. No answer arriving from the Luxembourg, the councils, on the 16th June, 1799 (28th Prairial), declared their sittings permanent. On its side, the directory adopted the same resolution by way of reprisal; but it was already incapable of parrying the blows with which it was threatened.

It was first deprived of the right of restraining the liberty of the press. The expression of opinion being no longer prevented, it was no longer possible for the legislators to defend the field. Consequently, scarcely was the appointment of Treilhard contested and revoked, than Treilhard retired, without opening his lips.

Merlin and Reveillère, however, were obstinate, and endeavoured to maintain themselves in the directorial chairs. Boulay de la Meurthe, and the deputies of his faction, proceeded to the Luxembourg, to demand imperiously the resignation of the two directors. At the same time Bertrand du Calvados, in the name of a commission

of eleven, of which Lucien was one, ascended the tribune, and found means to alarm the directors by the preface of their act of accusation. "I will not speak to you," cried he, "of your Rapinats, your Rivauds, your Trouves, and your Faypoults, who, not satisfied with exasperating our allies by extortions of every kind, violated by your orders the rights of nations, proscribed republicans, or arbitrarily displaced them to make way for traitors!" I was not ignorant of this sally, in which was implied an indirect approbation of my conduct, and a tacit condemnation of that pursued by the directory towards me.

At length, on the 30th Prairial (18th June), Merlin and Reveillère, upon a solemn assurance that they should not be impeached, sent in their resignation, and Sieyes became master of the field of battle. At that very instant, the whole strength of the revolution rallied round Sieyes and Barras.

In perfect understanding with the leaders of the councils, they used every means to admit, as their colleagues at the Luxembourg, in the room of the expelled directors, men such as Roger-Ducos, Moulins, and Gohier, who had not sufficient capacity or firmness to excite their jealousy. This arrangement tended greatly to make them masters of affairs, Roger-Ducos being associated in vote and interest with Sieyes.

The first-fruit of the triumph of the councils over the directory, was the appointment of Joubert to the command of Paris, an appointment obtained from Sieyes by Barras, and in which I also had a hand. A few days afterwards I was appointed to the embassy of Holland: this was a species of reparation, which the new directory owed me. I went to take leave of Sieyes; he told me that, till then, they had governed at random, without end and without fixed principles, and that it should not be so for the future; he expressed some uneasiness respecting the new flight of the anarchical spirit, with which, said he, it is impossible ever to govern. I

answered that it was time this aimless and irregular democracy should give place to a republican aristocracy, or government by wise and experienced men, the only one which could establish and consolidate itself. "Yes, doubtless," replied he, "and if that were possible, you should have a part in it; but how distant are we still from so desirable an object!" I then mentioned Joubert to him as a sincere and disinterested general, whom I had had an opportunity of being well acquainted with in Italy, and to whom might be safely intrusted, in case of need, a powerful influence; nothing was to be feared either from his ambition or his sword, which he would never turn against the liberty of his country. Sieyes, having attentively heard me to the conclusion, only replied by a *C'est bien!* I could discover nothing else in his crooked looks. Thus, it may be seen that I did not succeed in my intention of sounding him and drawing out his confidence. I knew, however, that, a short time before, he had had a very significant conversation with one of M. Talleyrand's friends, who has since been made a senator; that he owned to him that the revolution wandered without any object in a vicious circle; and that no stability or safety could be found but by help of another social organization, which would present us with a counterpart of the English Revolution of 1688; adding that, in that country, for more than a century, liberty and royalty had already been united together without satiety and without divorce. The objection was started, that there was no longer a William. "That is true," he replied, "but there are in the north of Germany wise princes, warriors, philosophers, who govern their little principality as paternally as Leopold governed Tuscany." Finding that he alluded to the Duke of Brunswick, the manifesto of 1792 was mentioned. "He is not the author of that cursed manifesto," replied he, with much warmth, "and it would be easy to prove that he himself advised the retreat from Champagne, refusing to expose France to fire and bloodshed, and to fight for the emi-

grants." "We must not, however," continued Sieyes, "think of the son of the cowardly Egalité; not only there is not substance enough in him, but it is certain that he has become reconciled with the pretender;[1] he would not dare to take a single step by himself. Among our generals, I do not see one who is capable of, or adequate to, placing himself at the head of a coalition of determined men to extricate us from the confusion in which we are at present involved, for it cannot be dissembled that our power and constitution are crumbling into ruin on all sides." This conversation required no comments; I knew also that Sieyes had held, upon our situation at home, nearly the same language to Barras. These glimmerings were sufficient to let me into his views, and to form my opinion respecting his inward ideas.

There is no doubt but that he already intended favouring us with a social compact of his own fashion. The haughty priest had long been devoured by the ambitious idea of becoming the sole legislator. I set off with the firm persuasion that he had succeeded in making his views agreeable to some men of influence, such as Daunou, Cabanis, Chénier, Garat, and the greater part of the members of the Council of the Ancients; who, hurried on since that, went beyond the goal they had proposed. Such was the germ of the revolution which shortly began to be prepared, and without which France would inevitably have fallen prostrate in the convulsions of anarchy, or under the repeated blows of the European coalition

I had scarcely time to go and present my credentials at the Hague, where I replaced Lombard de Langres, a kind of affected author, but in other respects a good-natured man. I found this other younger republic divided, as to its authorities, into firm and weak men; into aristocrats and democrats, as everywhere else. I convinced myself that the

[1] Louis the XVIIIth.

Orange, or English, party would never have influence upon the destinies of the country, so long as our armies were capable of protecting Holland. There I again met with Brune, who kept our troops firm in their obedience, although, at the same time, he winked at a contraband trade, indispensable to prevent the ruin of the country. I let him do as he pleased; we could not fail understanding each other perfectly; like me, he found himself sufficiently avenged by the overthrow of the unskilful rulers who had injured and expatriated us so *mal-à-propos*.

Nothing, however, was as yet fixed at Paris. The greatest instability prevailed, and it was to be apprehended that the triumph of the councils over the executive power might end by enervating and disorganizing the government. It was, above all, to be feared, that the anarchists, by abusing the consequences of the late revolution, might wish to overturn everything, in order to seize a power, which they were incapable of directing. They relied upon Bernadotte, whom they had appointed to be minister of the war department, and whose ambition and character did not sympathize with the views of Sieyes and his party.

Fortunately, the faction of Bonaparte, directed by his two brothers, and having for councillors Rœderer, Boulay de la Meurthe, and Regnier, coincided in viewing the necessity of arresting the march of the legislative body. Lucien took upon him to speak from the tribune. By proposing some line of demarcation for the future, he drew round his own party the old directors and their followers, who were fearful of being called to an account. The danger was pressing; the ultra party demanded the impeachment of the ex-directors, a measure which would bring to light or unveil all their malversations. A strong opposition, therefore, immediately arose, in a portion of those very deputies who had concurred in overthrowing the majority of the directory but merely in order to change the system of the government, and to get it into their own hands. They alleged, in favour

of the accused, that people were liable to make mistakes in politics, to adopt false theories, and be unsuccessful; that they might even yield to the intoxication which is attendant upon great power, and, in that, be more unfortunate than criminal. They above all recalled the promise, or rather the moral assurance given and received, that no measure should be adopted against the ex-directors if they made a voluntary resignation; and, finally, they recalled to remembrance that the councils had more than once sanctioned by their approbation the expedition into Egypt, and the declaration of war against the Swiss, now the objects of so much declamation. This impeachment, besides, would have revealed too much; and this Barras wished to avoid: on the other hand, it would also have had consequences prejudicial to the power itself, a thing which Sieyes considered as impolitic. These discussions were protracted, with the view of occupying the public attention till other incidents, and the march of events, might operate a diversion.[1] But how was it possible to stop at once the abuses of the press, which began to exceed all bounds, and the contagion of the popular clubs, which had everywhere been re-opened? Could Sieyes, at the head of his phalanx, composed of some forty philosophers, metaphysicians, and deputies, without any other energy than that stimulated by worldly interest, flatter himself with being able to overthrow anarchy, and erect a superstructure of social order without foundations? His coalition with Barras was precarious; in the directory, he could only calculate upon Roger-Ducos; with regard to Moulins and Gohier, his only guarantee for them was their extreme sincerity, and their limited political views. Men so insignificant might, at the critical moment, become the instruments of an enterprising faction. The ascendancy which Sieyes exercised in the directory might be diminished, or even turned against him by mistrust.

[1] All this is very clear, and we know no other production which throws so much light upon the intrigues of this period.—*French Editor.*

But when, indeed, he saw that he could rely on Joubert, invested with the command of Paris, and whose taste and habits were about to be flattered by a marriage into which he allowed himself to be entrapped, Sieyes resolved to make him the pivot of his reforming coalition. In consequence, the chief command of the army of Italy was given him, in the hope that he would bring back victory to our standards; and thus acquire a portion of glory sufficient for the part he was called to act.

This arranged, Sieyes perceived that he wanted the springs of a firm and active police. The police, as it was then constituted, naturally favoured the popular party, who had introduced into its body several of its creatures and leaders. The worthy Bourguignon, the then minister, owed his elevation to Gohier; but was entirely inadequate to fill such an office, beset with so many difficulties. This was felt, and at the very moment when I had just drawn up for Barras a memorial upon the situation of the home affairs, in which I treated, in its fullest extent, the question of general police, Barras himself joined with Sieyes, in order to dismiss Bourguignon; and, afterwards, with Gohier and Moulins, for the purpose of removing Alquier, Sieyes' candidate, and of calling me into office. I willingly exchanged my embassy for the direction of the police, although the ground on which I was about to tread appeared slippery. I lost no time in taking possession of my post; and on the 1st of August I was installed.

The principle cause of the fall of the crown in 1789 was the incapacity of the high police; the directors of it, at that time, were not able to penetrate the conspiracies and plots which threatened the royal family. The first pledge for the safety of any government whatever is a vigilant police, under the direction of firm and enlightened leaders. The difficulties of the high police are immense, whether it has to operate in the combinations of a representative government, so incompatible with arbitrary measures, and that leaves to the

factious legal arms with which to execute their projects; or whether it acts in behalf of a more concentrated form of government, aristocratical, directorial, or despotic. In the latter case, the task is the more difficult, for nothing transpires from without: it is in obscurity and mystery that traces must be discovered which only present themselves to inquiring and penetrating eyes. I found myself in the former case, with the double duty of discovering and dissolving the coalitions and legal oppositions against the established power, as well as the dark plots of royalists and foreign agents. The danger from these last was far less immediate.

I raised myself mentally above my functions, and felt not the least fear at their importance. In two hours I fully understood all my official duties. I did not, however, fatigue myself with considering the ministry intrusted to me in its minor details of arrangement. As things were situated, I felt that all the powers and abilities of a minister must be absorbed in the high police; the rest might safely be left to the *chefs de bureau*. My only study was, therefore, to seize with a steady and sure hand all the springs of the secret police, and all the elements composing it. I first insisted that, for these essential reasons, the local police of Paris, called the *bureau central* (the prefecture did not then exist), should be placed entirely under my control. I found all the constituent elements in the most deplorable state of confusion and decay. The treasury was empty; and without money, no police. I had soon money at my command, by making the vice inseparable from all great cities contribute to the safety of the state. My first act was to put a stop to a tendency to insubordination, in which some of the *chefs de bureau*, belonging to active factions, indulged themselves; but I judged it necessary not to introduce hasty reforms or ameliorations in the details. I confined myself, simply, to concentrating the high police within my own cabinet, with the assistance of an intimate and faithful secretary. I felt that I alone should be judge of the political state of the

interior, and that spies and secret agents were only to be considered as indicators and instruments often doubtful : in a word, I felt that the high police was not to be administered by memorials and long reports ; that there were means far more efficacious ; for example, that the minister himself was to place himself in contact with the leading men, of all opinions and doctrines, and of all the higher classes of society. This system never failed me, and I was better acquainted with the secrets of France by means of oral and confidential communications, and by open conversations, than by the heaps of written rubbish which continually passed under my eyes. Thus, nothing essential to the safety of the state ever escaped me, as will be proved in the sequel.

These preliminaries being settled, I explained to myself the political state of the interior, a kind of examination which I had already prepared in my mind. I had scrutinized every vice, and probed every wound of the social compact of the year III. (1795), by which we were governed ; and, to speak sincerely, I considered that compact incapable of being executed constitutionally. The two blows which had been aimed at it, on the 18th Fructidor, and the 30th Prairial, in a contrary sense, changed my assertion into a positive fact. From a government purely constitutional, the nation had passed under the dictatorship of five men ; this did not succeed. Now that the executive power was mutilated and weakened in its very essence, everything indicated that the despotism of a few would be changed into a popular storm, unless a strong barrier could be opportunely raised. I knew also that the man who had obtained the greatest influence, Sieyes, had from the commencement regarded this political establishment as absurd, and that he had even refused to take the helm.[1] If he had now surmounted his repugnance, it

[1] On the formation of the Directory, 10th Brumaire, year IV. (1 Nov. 1795), Sieyes was one of the five named by the Council of Ancients. But more flattered by being called to this high office, than anxious to undertake it, or not feeling confidence in this new mode of government, he declined. Carnot was named in his place, and accepted.—*English Editor.*

was because the opportunity of substituting a more reasonable organization appeared to have arrived; he could not demolish the bastions, without approaching the fortress itself. I explained myself to Barras, who mistrusted the sinuous proceedings of Sieyes as much as I did. But he had certain engagements with him, and, moreover, dreaded, on his own account, the exaggerations and encroachments of the popular party. This party spared him, but only from political considerations, and with the hope of opposing Sieyes, who was beginning to throw off the mask. In the eyes of the republicans, Barras was considered as an old worn-out director, with whom the preservation of the public weal was incompatible. On one side, he found himself pressed by the club of the *Manège*,[1] which, assuming the tone and attitude of the Jacobins, declaimed against dilapidators and public robbers; and on the other, by Sieyes, who, taking advantage of some degree of influence, had some secret views which he did not trust entirely to Barras.

Sieyes had no doubt already prepared a constitution to his own taste, which was to restrain and centralize power, as soon as events should develop themselves; his coalition was complete, and he thought himself certain of the co-operation of Joubert. A letter from this general gave me a glimpse of these intentions; he cherished the noble hope of returning, strengthened by the ascendancy of victory, to conciliate all parties. Sieyes had been heard to say, "Nothing can be accomplished with meddling fools and babblers: we only want two things, a head and a sword." I was in great hopes that the sword upon which he so much relied would not place itself entirely at his disposal.

Although his position was critical, temporizing with

[1] On the 5th Brumaire, year IV. (27th October, 1795), the *corps legislative* divided into two councils: the first, composed of 500 members, held its sittings in the *Salle de la Convention*, and the second, composed of 250 members, called the Ancients, and which, even in those times, was considered as a sort of house of peers, met at the Riding School, *Salle du Manège.—English Editor.*

Barras, and not being able to rely either upon Gohier or Moulins, who were both attached to the established order of things, he could, however, still rely upon his colleagues in their acquiescence to measures necessary to oppose the new legislative encroachments, and the attempts of the anarchists. Sieyes had, in the council of ancients, an organized band. It became necessary to assure himself of a numerical majority in the council of five hundred, in which the ardent and ultra party fixed their headquarters. The union of the directorials and politicals sufficed to keep it in check. Sure of the majority, the directory determined to make trial of their strength. As minister of police, in the state of affairs, I had only to manœuvre with dexterity and promptitude upon this line of operations. The first step was to render any dangerous coalition against the executive government totally impossible. I took upon myself to put a stop to the too great liberty of the public journals, and to the bold march of the political societies, which were rising again from their ashes. Such was the first proposition which I made to the directory, before the assembled council, after an explanatory report which Barras had concerted with Sieyes. I was left to act entirely as I thought proper, and I resolved to suppress the clubs first.

I began by a kind of proclamation, or circular, in which I declared that I had just taken upon myself the duty of watching for all, and over all, in order to re-establish tranquillity at home, and to put an end to the *massacres*. This last assurance, and the word which ended it, displeased the demagogues, who had flattered themselves with finding me accommodating. It was still worse when, on the 18th Thermidor (5th August), four days after my entrance into office, the directory transmitted my report upon the political societies to the council of ancients, who sent it to the council of five hundred. This was my ostensible task. In this report, which was guarded in its expressions, for fear of irritating republican susceptibility, I began with establishing

the necessity of protecting the interior discussions of the clubs, by surrounding them exteriorly with all the power of the republic ; then adding, that the first steps of these societies had been attempts against the constitution, I concluded by urging for measures which would compel them to confine themselves within the constitutional boundaries.

The sensation which the communication of this report produced in the chamber was very strong. Two deputies (who, I believe, were Delbrel and Clémanceau) considered this mode of forwarding my report, on the part of the council of ancients, as a prerogative, in point of precedence, contrary to the constitution. The deputy Grandmaison, after having applied the terms *false and calumnious* to my report, said it was the signal of a new re-action against the most ardent supporters of the republic. A very warm discussion then took place, whether the report should be printed,—a discussion which produced some animated observations from Briot and Garrau, who demanded it might be put to the vote ; this did not take place, and the printing of the report was not ordered. Thus, to speak the truth, in this first skirmish, the battle was a drawn one ; but I experienced a disadvantage : not one voice was raised in my favour, which led me to observe, how little reason there is, in a revolution, for relying upon cold and calculating spirits, whatever may have been the bait with which they were allured. They afterwards give you good reasons for justifying their silence ; but the only true one is the fear of committing themselves. The same day I was attacked with still greater violence in the society of the *Manège* (council of ancients).

I was neither disconcerted nor alarmed by this discouraging début. To have given way, would have been to work my own destruction, and abandon fortune in the road she opened to me. I resolved to manœuvre skilfully, in the midst of kindling passions, and of interests which clashed so openly. Sieyes, finding that the directory was shuffling,

and that Barras did not keep pace with his wishes, ordered the commissioner of inspectors of the council of ancients, who were sitting at the Tuileries, to close the hall of the *Manège*. This stroke of authority caused a sensation. I thought Sieyes certain of his object, and very strong, when, at the commemoration of the 10th of August, which was held with much pomp in the Champ de Mars, he made in his state-speech, as president, the most violent attacks upon the jacobins, declaring that the directory knew all the enemies which were conspiring against the republic, and that it would oppose them with equal vigour and perseverance, not by counterpoising one against the other, but by suppressing them all alike. At that very instant, as if some one wished to punish him for having fulminated forth these menacing words, at the moment when the salvos of artillery and musquetry terminated the ceremony, two or three balls were heard, or believed to be heard, whistling round Sieyes and Barras, followed by vociferations. Upon returning to the directory, whither I closely followed them, I found them both exasperated and enraged to the utmost degree. I said, that if indeed there had been a plot, it could only have been planned by some military instigators ; and fearing that I should myself become suspected by Sieyes, who would not have failed demanding my sacrifice, I insinuated to him, in a pencilled note, that he should remove General Marbot, commandant of Paris. It was notorious that this general showed himself completely devoted to the party of the ultra republicans, who were opposed to Sieyes' politics. Upon the proposition of Sieyes, that very night, without taking the opinion of Bernadotte, at that time the war-minister, and even without his knowledge, an order was made out, directing that Marbot should be employed on active service, according to his rank. The command of Paris was conferred upon General Lefévre, an illustrious serjeant, whose ambition was limited to being the instrument of the majority of the directory. The diatribe

of Sieyes at the Champ de Mars, and the *Houra* (shouts) against the jacobins, were considered, by one half of the council of five hundred, as an appeal to the counter-revolution; the passions fermented still more and more, and the directory itself became divided and irritated. Barras was in doubt whether he should attach himself to Gohier and Moulins, which would have isolated Sieyes. His incertitude could not escape me; I was convinced that it was not yet time to determine: I told him so candidly. Three days after the harangue of Sieyes, I took upon myself to order the closing of the hall of the Jacobins of the Rue du Bac. I had my reasons.[1] A message from the directory announced that the violation of the constitutional forms by this assembled society, had determined it to order the closing of it. This bold step completed the irritation of a violent faction, which now experienced nothing but checks either from the government or the councils. It became also necessary to show that measures as decisive could be adopted against the royalists, who began to stir in the west, and who had just made an ill-judged effort in La Haute Garonne. Upon my report, the directory demanded and obtained, by a message, the authority of making, for the space of one month, domiciliary visits to discover the emigrants, embaucheurs, assassins, and robbers.[2] A few military measures in La Haute Garonne were sufficient to stifle this ill-conceived and ill-directed insurrection. As to the excesses perpetrated afresh by the Chouans, in Brittany and La Vendée, as it was an inveterate evil proceeding from a vast cause, the remedy was not so easy in its application.

[1] What then were Fouché's views in thus manœuvring against those centres of the popular government, or rather against the sovereignty of the people, a favourite dogma of our author's? He has himself told us, he aspired to become one of the first heads of the revolutionary *aristocracy.*—*Note of the Editor.*

[2] He was here no longer the Fouché of the revolutionary aristocracy, but the Fouché of the convention; his police was like Janus, it had two faces. —*Note of the Editor.*

The law of hostages, which prescribed measures against the relations of emigrants and nobles, instead of appeasing the troubles in their birth, did but increase them. This law, which but too much recalled to memory the reign of terror, appeared to me to be very odious, and well calculated to raise a great number of enemies. I contented myself with neutralizing its execution as much as depended upon myself, taking care, at the same time, that my repugnance should not excite the apprehensions of the directory and the departmental authorities. I was fully aware that these troubles were connected with one wound of the state, which the cabinet of London did its utmost to deepen. I despatched into the western departments intelligent emissaries, to give me exact information of the state of things; I then gained a certain number of royalist agents, who, having fallen into our power in the different disturbed departments, had to fear either death, exile, or perpetual imprisonment. The greater part of these had offered their services to the government; I contrived means for their escape without their being liable to be suspected by their own party, whose ranks they again went to fill. They almost all rendered valuable services, and I can even say that through them and the information they furnished, I succeeded at a later period in putting an end to the civil war.[1]

The greatest obstacles proceeded from amongst ourselves; they were raised by the schism of the revolutionists, divided into the possessors of power and those who wished for places. The latter, impatient and irritated, became more and more exacting and hostile. How could it be hoped to govern and reform the state while the press had too much liberty? Its licentiousness was at its height. "The directory, now nearly royalty," said the *Journal des Hommes Libres*, "has ostensibly sanctioned the massacre of re-

[1] Here, Fouché speaks as the precursor and promoter of the imperial régime.—*Note of the Editor.*

publicans by the speech of its president on the 10th of August, and by its message on the shutting up of political societies." Upon arriving at the Luxembourg, I found, as I expected, Sieyes and his colleagues exasperated against the journals ; I immediately suggested a message, requiring from the councils measures calculated to curb the counter-revolutionary journalists and the libellers. The message was being drawn up, when the first intelligence arrived of the loss of the battle of Novi, and the death of Joubert. The directory was thunder-struck and discouraged. Although overcome with grief myself, I suggested nevertheless that the reins should not be let loose ; nothing, however, could be decided on that day. In the circumstances in which we were placed, the loss of the battle was a disaster, the death of Joubert a calamity. He had set off with special instructions to come to an engagement with the Russians. Unfortunately, the delay of a month, occasioned by his marriage with Mlle. de Montholon, had given the enemy time to reinforce himself, and to oppose to our army more formidable masses. The death of Joubert, who was struck down at the first discharge of musquetry, and which has justly been deemed suspicious, has never been clearly explained. I have questioned ocular witnesses respecting the event, who seemed persuaded that the murderous ball was fired from a small cottage, by some hired ruffian, the musquetry of the enemy not being within reach of the group of staff-officers, in the middle of which was Joubert, when he came up to encourage the advanced guard, which was giving way. It has even been said, that the shot was fired by a Corsican chasseur of our light troops. But let us not endeavour to unravel a dreadful mystery, by conjectures or facts not sufficiently substantiated. *I leave you Joubert!* said Bonaparte, on setting off for Egypt. I must add, that his valour was heightened by his simplicity of manners and his disinterestedness, and that in him a correct *coup d'œil* was found, united with

rapidity of execution—a cool head with a warm heart. And this warrior was just snatched from us, perhaps by means of the secret machinations of guilt, at the moment when he might have raised and saved the country!

The progress of the political views of the government was suspended for nearly a fortnight; we could not, however, see ourselves perish. I roused Barras; and knowing for certain that Sieyes was meditating an important blow, which it was essential to encourage, these two directors, reunited to Roger-Ducos, resolved, upon my suggestions, to begin afresh the execution of their plans. Resolved to restrain the licentiousness of the press, I determined upon a decisive blow; I, at one stroke of my pen, suppressed eleven of the most popular journals among the jacobins and the royalists. I caused their presses to be seized; and even arrested the authors, whom I accused of sowing dissension among the citizens, of establishing it by representing it as really existing, of blasting private characters, misrepresenting motives, reanimating factions, and rekindling animosities.[1]

By its message, the directory confined itself to informing the councils that the too great liberty of several journalists had determined it to bring them before the tribunals, and to put seals upon their printing presses. Upon my report being read, murmurs were heard, and much agitation pervaded the hall. The deputy, Briot, declared that some *coup d'état* was in preparation; and after a personal attack upon me, demanded the suppression of the ministry of the police. The next day the directory caused an approbation of my administration to be inserted in the *Redacteur* and *Moniteur*.[2]

[1] Always the same when a government equally free from contradictors and contradictions is the object in view, Fouché, here, follows only the errors of the convention, of the committee of public safety, and of the directory, on the 18th Fructidor; he will do the same under Bonaparte, and he will *prove* to us that he is right.—*Note of the Editor.*

[2] The *Moniteur* is still the government paper, and has been so through all the changes of the French revolution: its politics changing of course with the times, and being dictated by the existing power.—*English Editor.*

We had resumed our plans; we had secured Moreau to our party, a republican in his heart, but detesting anarchy. He was indeed but a poor politician, and we did not derive great motives of security in his co-operation. Careless, and easily alarmed, he was constantly in need of a stimulus. But we had no longer the faculty of choosing; for, among the generals then in credit, there was not one upon whom we could safely rely.

The political horizon daily became more gloomy. We had just lost Italy, and were menaced with the loss of Holland and Belgium: an Anglo-Russian expedition had landed on the 27th of August, in the north of Holland. From these reverses the ultra party derived fresh vigour. Their meetings became more frequent and active; they chose for their leaders Jourdan and Augereau, who had seats in the five hundred and in the council, and Bernadotte, who was minister for war. Nearly two hundred deputies had recruited their party: it was, indeed, a minority, but an alarming one; as its roots in the directory, it had also the directors Moulins and Gohier, at the moment when Barras, affecting to preserve a kind of equilibrium, believed himself, by this very circumstance, the arbiter of affairs. If he did not detach himself from Sieyes, it was solely from the fear that too violent a movement might deprive him of the power. I carefully supported him in this disposition, much less to maintain myself in my post, than actuated by my love for my country[1]: too violent a convulsion in favour of the popular party would have been our destruction at this crisis.

The motion for declaring the country in danger, proposed by Jourdan, was the signal of a grand effort on the part of our adversaries. I had been informed of it the night before. So that all our majority, assembled not without difficulty, after a meeting at the house of the deputy Frége-

[1] What candour, what disinterestedness, in Fouché!—*French Editor.*

ville, marched to their post, determined to stand firm. The picture of the dangers which surrounded us on every side was first drawn. "Italy under the yoke, the barbarians of the north at the very barriers of France, Holland invaded, the fleets treacherously given up, Helvetia ravaged, bands of royalists indulging in every excess in many of the departments, the republicans proscribed under the name of *terrorists* and *jacobins*." Such were the principal traits of the gloomy picture which Jourdan drew of our political situation. "One more reverse upon our frontiers," cried he, "and the alarm-bell of royalty will ring over the whole surface of the soil of France, as that of liberty did on the 14th July."

After having conjured the directory, from the legislative tribune, to remove the lukewarm friends of the republic, in a crisis in which energy alone could be the salvation of France, he concluded by a motion, the object of which was to declare the country in danger. The adoption of this proposition would have hastened the movement which we were anxious to prevent, or at least to regulate. It produced the most violent debates. The intention of the party had been to carry it with a high hand; but whether from shame, or irresolution, they consented to adjourn the debate till the next day: this gave us breathing time.

I was informed that the most ardent among the patriots had earnestly solicited Bernadotte to mount his horse and declare for them, aided by a tumult both civil and military. Already, in spite of the efforts and opposition of the police, an appeal had been made to the old and new jacobins, to the old and new terrorists. Upon Barras and myself devolved the task of dissuading Bernadotte from an enterprise which would have made him the Marius of France, a part compatible neither with his character nor habits. Ambition was doubtless his ruling passion; but it was a useful and generous ambition, and liberty was the object of his sincere devotion. We both touched these sensitive chords, and suc-

ceeded in overcoming him. He was, however, aware of the projects which had been formed under the ægis of Joubert, and of the proposals made afterwards to Moreau, to change the form of government. We assured him that these were mere undigested ideas, mere chance projects brought forward by those theorists with which governments are continually annoyed in critical times; that nothing in this respect had been determined upon; that the constitution would be respected, as long as our enemies did not wish to destroy it themselves. Barras hinted to him, that it was advisable he should express his wish to be appointed commander-in-chief of an army, as while he held the war portfolio, he was the rallying point for an active party opposed to government. He avoided explaining himself respecting the hint thrown out, and left us.

Sieyes and Roger-Ducos were extremely fearful of adopting a wrong measure; the more so as I had certain intelligence, that vast crowds would be assembled round the legislative hall, and that the party flattered themselves they should carry their object by a *coup-de-main*, with the assistance of three generals for their leaders. Sieyes, in his quality of president, having sent for Bernadotte, talked him over, and very adroitly got him to say, that he would consider the chief command of an army as an honourable reward for his labours as minister. Upon this, Sieyes proposed immediate action. General Lefévre had already received orders to concert with me the necessary military measures for dispersing by force the assembled multitude, after having previously made himself sure of the good disposition of the soldiery. I found him full of confidence, and I thought I might rely upon his soldierlike inflexibility. My secret informations coinciding with other confidential communications, Sieyes and Barras, united with Roger-Ducos, dismissed Bernadotte, without even mentioning it to Moulins or Gohier. To appease them, they were compelled to assure them that they should be consulted upon the choice of the new minister, a

choice which Gohier, seconded by Barras, directed, a few days after, upon Dubois de Crancé.

The debate was opened in rather an imposing manner, upon the motion of Jourdan. Two opinions were expressed; one party was desirous that the government should preserve its ministerial and secret character; the other that it should receive a national and public one. These were as so many masks, to conceal the real views of both parties. Jourdan's motion was opposed with much talent and ingenuity by Chénier and Lucien Bonaparte, and with less ability by Boulay de la Meurthe. Lucien declared, that the only mode of surmounting the crisis was, by intrusting a great extent of power to the executive authority. He, however, thought it his duty to combat the idea of a dictatorship. "Is there one among us," cried he (this is very remarkable), "who would not arm himself with the poinard of Brutus, and chastise the base and ambitious enemy of his country?" This was condemning beforehand the 18th Brumaire, of which Lucien himself ensured the success two months afterwards. It is evident that he, at that time, was less anxious not to appear inconsistent than to prevent the establishment of any kind of dictatorship; for it would have dashed down the hopes which his brother cherished in Egypt, to whom he had despatched packet after packet to urge his return. Lucien's grand object was, that he should find the field clear, being well assured that neither hesitation nor irresolution would be found in him; superior in this respect to our timorous generals, who, fearful of the responsibility of a precarious power, saw no other mode of reform but that of a new organization, consented to by men who were averse to any.

The debate in the council of five hundred was very stormy. The report of Bernadotte's dismission irritated it considerably. Jourdan perceived in this the certain prognostics of a *coup d'état*, and demanded the permanence of the councils; his motions were all negatived by two hundred

and forty-five votes against one hundred and seventy-one. One hundred and two of the warmest among the deputies entered their protests. The mobs and crowds assembled around the hall were dreadful, and their shouts and vociferations threatening. The mass of the population of Paris showed their alarm. But, whether from inability or fatigue, or from the efficacy of the measures of the military, and the manœuvres of my agents, all the elements of trouble and discord were dissipated, and tranquillity seemed to be restored.

The victory gained by the executive magistracy was complete; the council of ancients rejected the resolution which was to have deprived the directory of the power of introducing troops within the constitutional radius.

These were, however, but evasive means. The country was really in danger; angry factions rent the state. The removal of Bernadotte, disguised under the appearance of his having himself tendered his resignation, was doubtless a bold step, but one which might be interpreted to the disadvantage of the directory. In a letter which was made public, Bernadotte replied in these terms to the official notice which was given of his retiring. "I did not give in the resignation *which has been accepted*, and I make known this fact for the honour of truth, which equally belongs to contemporaries and to history." Then saying he was in want of rest, he solicited a pension (*traitement de reforme*), "which I think I have deserved," added he, "by twenty years of uninterrupted services."

Thus were we again plunged into chaos by the effect of this grand division of opinion which pervaded both the legislative body and the directory. "The vessel of the state," said I often to myself, "will float without following any direction, till a pilot present himself capable of bringing it safe into port.[1]"

[1] Fouché ably prepares for the 18th Brumaire.—*French Editor.*

Two sudden events saved us. First, the battle of Zurich, gained by Massena on the 25th of September, who, by again defeating the Russians, and by preserving our frontier, permitted us to linger on without any crisis at home till the 16th of October, the day on which Bonaparte, who had landed on the 9th at Fréjus, made his entry into Paris, after having violated the laws of quarantine, so essential to the preservation of the public health.

Here let us pause an instant. The course of human events is, doubtless, subjected to an impulse which is derived from certain causes, the effects of which are inevitable. Imperceptible to the vulgar, these causes strike either more or less the statesman ; he discovers them either in certain signs, or in fortuitous incidents, whose inspirations enlighten and direct him. What follows happened to me five or six weeks before Bonaparte's landing. I was informed that two persons, employed in the *bureau de police*, discussing the state of affairs, had said that Bonaparte would be soon seen again in France. I traced this remark to its source, and found it to have no other origin than one of those gleams of the mind which may be considered as a species of involuntary foresight. This idea made its impression upon me. I soon learned from some persons about Lucien and Joseph, what were their real thoughts on the subject. They were persuaded that, if their letters and packets arrived in Egypt, in spite of the British cruisers, Bonaparte would do his utmost to return ; but the chances appeared to them so uncertain and hazardous, that they dared not trust to them. Réal, one of Bonaparte's secret correspondents, went still further ; he owned to me his hopes. I imparted them to Barras, but found him without any decided opinion upon the matter. As to myself, concealing the discoveries I had made, I made several advances, both to the two brothers and to Josephine, with the view of making both families favourable ; they were divided. I found Josephine much more accessible. It is well known by what ill-judged pro-

fusion she perpetuated the disorder and the embarrassments of her affairs : she was always without money. The income of forty thousand francs, secured to her by Bonaparte before his departure, was insufficient for her ; independent of two extra remittances, amounting together to the same sum, which had been sent her from Egypt, in less than one year. Besides this, Barras having recommended her to me, I had included her in the number of those who had a share in the secret distribution made of the funds arising from taxes on gambling houses. I gave her, with my own hands, one thousand louis, a ministerial compliment which more than all rendered her favourable to me.[1] Through her I obtained much information, for she saw all Paris ; with Barras, however, she was reserved ; but she was more intimate with Gohier, at that time president of the directory, and whose lady she admitted into her society ; she complained much, at the same time, of her brothers-in-law, Joseph and Lucien, with whom she was on very bad terms. The information I obtained from different quarters, at length, convinced me that Bonaparte would suddenly burst upon us ; I was, therefore, prepared for this event, at the time when it struck every one with surprise.

There would have been no great merit in coming to take possession of an immense power, which was offered to the most enterprising, and of gathering the fruits of an enterprise in which, to succeed, the display of audacity was alone requisite ; but, to abandon a victorious army, to pass through hostile fleets, to arrive in the very nick of time, hold all parties in suspense, and decide for the safest—to weigh, balance, and master everything in the midst of so many contrary interests and opposing passions, and all this in twenty-five days, supposes wonderful ability, a firm character, and prompt decision. To enter into the details of the short interval between the arrival of Bonaparte and the

[1] This is truly being a clever man, and it is pretty well known what the signification of the adjective "clever" is with revolutionists.—*Editor.*

18th Brumaire, would fill a volume, or, rather, require the pen of a Tacitus.

Bonaparte, with much adroitness, had caused his arrival to be preceded by that of the bulletin announcing the victory of Aboukir. It had not escaped my notice, that, in certain coteries, people published it with a degree of earnestness, and even had recourse to puffing and hyperbole. Since the last despatches from Egypt, much more activity and cheerfulness were perceptible at Josephine's and her brothers'-in-law. "Ah! if he should arrive!" said Josephine to me; "it is not impossible: should he have received the news of our disasters in time, nothing would prevent his flying hither to repair and save all!" A fortnight had scarcely elapsed after hearing these words, and Bonaparte suddenly landed. The most lively enthusiasm was excited on his passing through Aix, Avignon, Valence, Vienne, and especially Lyon: it seemed as if the universal feeling was that a chief was wanting, and that that chief had arrived under auspices the most fortunate. Upon being announced at Paris, in the theatres, the intelligence produced an extraordinary sensation, a universal delirium of joy. No doubt there was something factitious in all this, some concealed impelling power; but the general opinion cannot be commanded, and certainly it was very favourable to this unexpected return of a great man. From this moment, he appeared to consider himself as a sovereign who had been received in his dominions. The directory, at first, felt a secret vexation, and the republicans, from instinct, were much alarmed. A deserter from the army of the east, and an infractor of the quarantine laws, Bonaparte would have been crushed by a firm government. But the directory, witnessing the general delirium, dared not punish: it was besides divided. How could the directors agree upon so important an affair, without a unanimity of views and intentions? The very next day, Bonaparte repaired to the Luxembourg, to render an account, in a private sitting, of the situation in which he had left Egypt. There,

BONAPARTE.

endeavouring to excuse his sudden return, by expressing a determination to share and avert the dangers of the country, he swore to the directory, grasping at the same time the pommel of his sword, that it should never be drawn but in defence of the republic and its government. The directory appeared convinced—so disposed was it to deceive itself.

Finding himself thus welcomed and courted by the governors themselves, Bonaparte, firmly resolved upon seizing upon the chief authority, considered himself certain of his object. Everything would depend upon the dexterity of his manœuvres. He first examined the state of parties. The popular one, or that of the *Manège*, of which Jourdan was one of the chiefs, was lost, as we have seen, in the abyss of an interminable revolution. Next came the party of the speculators upon revolutions, whom Bonaparte called the *pourris*, at the head of which was Barras; then the moderates or *politiques*, led by Sieyes, who endeavoured to fix the destinies of the revolution, that they might be the directors or arbiters of it. Could Bonaparte ally himself with the jacobins, even had they been inclined to confer the dictatorship upon him? But after having been victorious with them, he would have been under the necessity of soon conquering without them. What had Barras really to offer him, but a *rotten plank*, according to Bonaparte's own expression? The party of Sieyes remained, which he was also compelled to deceive, the illustrious deserter being unwilling to employ, otherwise than as an instrument, him who intended to remain at the head of affairs. Thus, in fact, Bonaparte could calculate upon no party whose object would have been the foundation of his own fortune by an open usurpation; and yet he succeeded, by deceiving every one, by deceiving the directors Barras and Sieyes, and especially Moulins and Gohier, who alone were sincere.

He first formed a kind of privy council, composed of his brothers, of Berthier, Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely, Rœderer, Réal, Bruix, and another person, who soon

eclipsed the others by his acuteness and ability; I mean M. de Talleyrand, who, harassed by the party of the *Manège*, and forced to abandon the ministry, made a merit of it in the new intrigues. He at first feared that he should not be well received by Bonaparte, on account of the expedition to Egypt, or rather, for having advised it. He, however, adroitly sounded his way, presented himself, and employed all the resources of his insinuating and supple mind to captivate the man, who, with a single *coup d'œil*, perceived all the advantage he could derive from him. It was he who disclosed to his views all the diseases of the government, and made him acquainted with the state of parties, and the bearings of each character. From him he learnt that Sieyes, followed by Roger-Ducos, meditated a *coup d'état*;—that he was exclusively occupied with the project of substituting for the existing state of affairs, a government after his own fashion;—that, if on the one hand, he had against him the most determined of the republicans, who repented having elected him, on the other he had a party already formed, the focus of which was in the council of ancients, an advantage possessed by no other director, not even Barras, who fluctuated between Sieyes on the one part, and Moulin and Gohier on the other;—that the two last, blindly attached to the existing order of things, were somewhat inclined towards the most ardent republicans, and even to the jacobins, and that with more talent and decision of character, they might dispose, at their own pleasure, of the council of the five hundred, and even of a considerable part of the other council. Everything Talleyrand told him was confirmed by the opinions of his other advisers. As to himself, he had not yet suffered his real intentions to transpire. He manifested much coolness towards Sieyes, little confidence in Barras, much openness and intimacy with Moulins and Gohier; he even went so far as to propose to them to get rid of Sieyes, upon condition of himself being elected in his place. But not being yet qualified by age to enter the

directory, and the two directors fearing perhaps his ambition, remained inflexible, on the score of his age. It was then, doubtless, that his agents brought him upon more friendly terms with Sieyes. In this affair Talleyrand employed Chénier, and the latter Daunou. In a first conference between him, Daunou, Sieyes, Chénier, he gave them the assurance of leaving to them the direction of the government, promising to be satisfied with being the first officer of the executive authority: this I have from Chénier himself.

It was immediately after this conference that the first meetings of the deputies were held sometimes at Le Mercier's, and sometimes at Fregeville's. Who would credit it? Bonaparte had at first his own brother Lucien against him. "You know him not," said he to them who wished to entrust him with the entire direction of the movement which was in agitation; "you know him not; once there, he will think himself in his camp; will command everything, and be everything."

But eight days after, Lucien's co-operation was warm and powerful. With him as with so many others, the republican suspicion could not resist the tempting bait of riches and honours.

It has been asserted, that I took no part whatever in these salutary plots; that I had temporized, but that I had gathered the fruits of them with the greatest dexterity. Certainly, the moment in which I am now writing is not favourable for laying claim to the honour of having contributed to Bonaparte's elevation; but I have promised the truth, and I feel a satisfaction in telling it, superior to all the calculations of vanity, and all the disappointments of deceived hopes.

The revolution of St. Cloud would have failed had I opposed it; it was in my power to mislead Sieyes, put Barras on his guard, and enlighten Gohier and Moulins; I had only to back Dubois de Crancé, the only opposing minister, and the whole would have fallen to the ground. But it would have been stupidity in me not to have preferred

some future prospects to an unpromising blank. My ideas were fixed. I considered Bonaparte as alone capable of effecting the political reforms imperiously called for by our manners, vices, extravagances, and excesses, by our disasters, and fatal divisions.

Bonaparte, indeed, was too cunning to let me into the secret of his means of execution, and to place himself at the mercy of a single man. But he said enough to me to win my confidence, and to persuade me, of what I was already convinced, that the destinies of France were in his hands.

In two interviews we had at Réal's house, I did not conceal the obstacles he had to surmount. I knew well what embarrassed him: it was to have to contend with republican enthusiasm, to which he could only oppose the moderates or the bayonet. He, at this time, appeared to me, politically speaking, inferior to Cromwell; he had also to dread the fate of Cæsar, without possessing either his fame or his genius.

But, on the other hand, what a difference between him, Lafayette, and Dumouriez! He possessed all that these two soldiers of the revolution had wanted, to master it or take it in his own hands. All parties already seemed motionless, and in expectation before him. His return, his presence, his renown, the crowds of his adherents, his immense influence on the public opinion, caused much inquietude among the jealous lovers of liberty and of the republic. The two directors, Gohier and Moulins, now become their hope, endeavoured to gain him by dint of attentions and proofs of confidence. They proposed to their colleagues to confer upon him the command of the army of Italy. Sieyes opposed it; Barras said, that he had already improved his own affairs there so much, as not to need to return again. This expression, which was reported to him, caused him to come to the directory to demand an explanation. There, his firm and lofty manner showed that he was above all fear.

Gohier, president of the directory, leaving him the choice of an army, he replied very coolly to his proposals. I saw clearly he was hesitating whether he should effect his revolution in conjunction with Barras or Sieyes.

It was now that I pointed out to him the necessity of acting without delay, by persuading him to mistrust Sieyes and draw closer to Barras, so anxious was I that he should associate him in his views. "Have Barras on your side," said I to him, "attend to the military party, paralyze Bernadotte, Jourdan, and Augereau, and force Sieyes to follow you." I thought, for a moment, that my own suggestions and those of Réal would overcome his dislike to Barras; he even went so far as to promise us either to make him overtures, or to receive his. We informed Barras of this, who sent him an invitation to dine with him the next day; this was the 8th Brumaire (30th October, 1799). In the evening Réal and I waited upon Bonaparte at his residence, to know the result of his conference with Barras. We there found Talleyrand and Rœderer. His carriage was soon heard approaching: he appeared.—"Well," said he to us, "do you know what this Barras of yours requires? He does not deny, certainly, that it is impossible to proceed in the present state of things: he will consent to the creation of a president of the republic; but it is himself whom he proposes. What ridiculous pretensions? And this hypocritical wish of his he masks by proposing to invest with the supreme magistracy—whom do you suppose? Hédouville, a very blockhead. Does not this sufficiently prove to you that it is upon himself he wishes to fix the public attention?—What madness!—It is impossible to have anything to do with such a man."

I owned that in this there was certainly nothing practicable, but I said that, notwithstanding, I did not despair of convincing Barras that there were means of coming to an understanding to save the public affairs; and that Réal and I would go to him, and reproach him with his dissimulation

and want of confidence ; that to all appearance we should make him consent to more reasonable arrangements, by proving to him, that, in this case, subtlety was out of season, and that he could do nothing better than unite his own destinies with those of a great man. "We take upon ourselves," added we, "to bring him with us." "Well do so," said he. We immediately proceeded to Barras. He told us, at first, that it was very natural he should require guarantees, which Bonaparte continually eluded ; we alarmed him, by giving a picture of the real state of things, and of the ascendency which the general exercised over the whole of the government. He at last agreed with us, and promised to go early the next day, and place himself at his disposal. He kept his word ; and, upon his return, appeared persuaded that nothing could be done without him.

Bonaparte had, however, decided for Sieyes. He had entered into engagements with him ; besides, in throwing threads in every direction, he had enabled himself to choose the intrigue most useful to his politics and ambition. On the one hand, he circumvented Gohier and Moulins ; on the other, he held Barras in suspense, and Sieyes and Roger-Ducos fettered. For myself, I was only informed of his operations through Réal, who was, so to speak, a mutual guarantee between Bonaparte and me.

Reckoning from the 9th Brumaire, the conspiracy developed itself rapidly ; each made his recruits. Talleyrand gave us Semonville, and among the principal generals, Beurnonville and Macdonald. Among the bankers, we had Collot ; he lent two millions : this set the enterprise in full sail. They commenced secretly tampering with the garrison of Paris ; amongst others, two regiments of cavalry which had served in Italy under Bonaparte. Lannes, Murat, and Leclerc were employed in gaining over the commanders of corps, and in seducing the principal officers. Independently of these three generals, and of Berthier and Marmont, we could soon rely upon Serrurier and Lefèvre ; Moreau and

Moncey were secured. Moreau, with a self-denial of which he had afterwards to repent, owned that Bonaparte was the man necessary to reform the state; he thus, of his own accord, pointed him out to play the lofty part which had been destined for himself, but for which he had neither disposition nor political energy.

On his side, the most active and able of the faction, Lucien, seconded by Boulay de la Meurthe and by Regnier, concerted measures with the most influential members devoted to Sieyes. In these meetings figured Chazal, Fregeville, Daunou, Lemercier, Cabanis, Lebrun, Courtois, Cornet, Fargues, Baraillon, Villetard, Goupil-Prefeln, Vimar, Bouteville, Cornudet, Herwyn, Delcloy, Rousseau, and Le Jarry. The conspirators of the two councils were deliberating upon the best and surest means of execution, when Dubois de Crancé went to denounce the conspiracy to the directors Gohier and Moulins; requiring them to arrest Bonaparte instantly, and offering himself to see the order of the directory to this effect executed. The two directors, however, felt themselves so certain of Bonaparte, that they refused to give any credit to the information of the minister-at-war. They required proofs from him before they opened the matter to Barras, or took any other measure. They required proofs, at a time when a conspiracy was being openly carried on, as is the custom in France. Conspiracy was a-foot at Sieyes', at Bonaparte's, at Murat's, at Lannes', and at Berthier's; conspiracy was being carried on in the saloons of the inspectors of the council of ancients, and of the principal members of the committees. Failing to persuade either Gohier or Moulins, Dubois de Crancé despatched to them at the Luxembourg a police agent, who was well acquainted with the plot, and who revealed the whole of it to them. Gohier and Moulins, after having heard him, caused him to be confined, while they deliberated upon his revelations. This man, uneasy at a proceeding the motive of which he could not understand, alarmed and terrified

escaped out of a window, and came to inform me of what had passed. His evasion and my own counter-mines soon effaced from the minds of the two directors the impression which the proceeding of Dubois de Crancé had made. I informed Bonaparte of all.

The impulse was immediately given, Lucien assembled Boulay, Chazal, Cabanis, and Emile Gaudin; each had his part assigned him. It was in the house of Madame Récamier, near Bagatelle, that Lucien arranged the legislative measures which were to coincide with the military explosion. The presidency of the council of five hundred, with which he was invested, was one of the principal supports on which the conspiracy rested. Two powerful passions at this time agitated Lucien; ambition and love. Deeply enamoured of Madame Récamier, a woman full of sweetness and charms, he considered himself the more unfortunate, because, having won her heart, he could not suspect the cause of her cruel severities. In this tumult of his senses, however, he lost none of his activity and political energy. She who possessed his heart could read all there, and was discreet.

It had been agreed, that the more effectually to disguise the plot, a splendid banquet should be given by subscription to Bonaparte, to which should be invited the chief of the high authorities, and of the deputies of both parties. The banquet was given, but was utterly destitute of cheerfulness and enthusiasm; a mournful silence, and an air of restraint pervaded it; the parties were watching each other. Bonaparte, embarrassed with the part he had to act, retired at an early hour, leaving the guests a prey to their reflections.

With Lucien's consent, Bonaparte had, on the 15th of Brumaire, a secret interview with Sieyes, in which were discussed the arrangements for the 18th. The object was to remove the directory, and to disperse the legislative body, but without violence, and by means, to all appearance, legal; but prepared with all the resources of artifice and audacity. It was determined to open the drama by a decree of the council of

ancients, ordering the removal of the legislative corps to St. Cloud. The choice of St. Cloud, for the assembling of the two councils, was to prevent all possibility of a popular movement, and, at the same time, to afford a facility for employing the troops with greater security, away from the contact of Paris.

In consequence of what was agreed upon between Sieyes and Bonaparte, the secret council of the principal conspirators, held at the Hotel de Breteuil, gave, on the 16th, its last instructions to Lemercier, the president of the council of ancients. These were to order an extraordinary convocation in the hall of the ancients, at the Tuileries, on the 18th, at ten o'clock in the morning. The signal was immediately given to the commission of the inspectors of the same council, over which the deputy, Cornet, presided.

The third article of the constitution invested the council of ancients with the power of removing the two councils out of Paris. This was the *coup d'etat* which had been proposed to Sieyes by Baudin des Ardennes even before the arrival of Bonaparte. Baudin was at that time president of the commission of the inspectors of the ancients, and possessed great influence in the council. In 1795, he had a great part in drawing up the constitution; but, disgusted with his work, he entered into the views of Sieyes. It had always been his opinion, that an arm for action was required; that is to say, a general capable of directing the military part of an event which might assume a serious character. The execution of it had been put off. On the news of Bonaparte's landing, Baudin, struck with the idea that Providence had sent the man for whom he and his party had so long searched in vain, died the very same night, from excess of joy. He was succeeded by Cornet in the presidency of the commission of inspectors of the ancients, now become the principal centre of the conspiracy. He possessed neither the talent nor the influence of Baudin des Ardennes; but he made up for it by his great zeal and activity.

It was of great importance to neutralize Gohier, president of the directory. With the view, therefore, of the better deceiving him, Bonaparte invited him to dine with him on the 18th, with his wife and brothers. He also caused to be invited to breakfast for the same day, at eight o'clock in the morning, the generals and chiefs of corps; announcing also, that he would receive the visits and respects of the officers of the garrison, and of the adjutants of the national guard, who, since his return, had in vain solicited admission to his presence. One only obstacle caused uneasiness; this was the integrity of the president, Gohier, who, if undeceived in time, might rally round him all the popular party, and the generals opposed to the conspiracy. Indeed, I was awake to this. However, for better security, it was proposed to draw the president of the directory into a snare. At midnight, Madame Bonaparte sent him, by her son, Eugène Beauharnais, a friendly invitation for himself and his lady to breakfast with her, at eight o'clock in the morning.—"I have," wrote she, "some very important things to communicate to you." But the hour appeared suspicious to Gohier, and, after Eugène's departure, he decided that his wife should go alone.

Already Cornet, the president of the commission of the ancients, was busy in despatching from his office private invitations to such members as were in the secret, or upon whom he could rely, to assemble at five in the morning. The two commissions of both councils were in permanence. The ostensible meeting of the deputies of the ancients was fixed for ten in the morning, and the assembly of the deputies of the five hundred at twelve. This last council was about to find itself obliged to close the sitting, after the mere reading of the decree of removal, in favour of which votes were already secured in the ancients. I had arranged everything, in order to be informed in time of what took place, either at the commissions, at Bonaparte's, or at the directory.

At eight o'clock in the morning, I learnt that the president

of the commission of the ancients, after having formed, by his extraordinary convocation, a fictitious majority, had, upon concluding a long and turgid harangue, in which he represented the republic in the greatest danger, moved to transfer the legislative corps to St. Cloud, and to invest Bonaparte with the chief command of the troops. It was at the same time announced to me, that the decree was about to pass. I instantly got into my carriage, and going first to the Tuileries, learnt that the decree had been made; and about nine o'clock I arrived at the house of General Bonaparte, the courtyard of which was full of military. Every avenue was filled with officers and generals; and the house was not spacious enough to contain the crowds of his friends and adherents. All the corps of the garrison of Paris and of the military division had sent officers to take his orders. I entered the oval cabinet in which Bonaparte was; he was impatiently awaiting, with Berthier and Lefèvre, the determination of the council of ancients. I announced to him that the decree of removal, which conferred upon him the chief command, had just passed, and that it would be instantly laid before him. I reiterated to him my protestations of devotion and zeal, informing him that I had just closed all the barriers, and stopped the departure of mails and stages. "All that is useless," said he to me, in presence of several generals who entered: "the numbers of citizens and brave men around me must sufficiently convince, that I act with, and for, the nation. I shall take care to cause the decree of the council to be respected, and to maintain the public tranquillity." At that instant Josephine came up to him, and told him, with much dissatisfaction, that the president Gohier had sent his wife, but would not come himself.—"Write to him, by Madame Gohier, to come as quick as possible," cried Bonaparte. A few minutes after, the deputy Cornet arrived, quite proud of performing, with the general, the functions of state-messenger. He brought him the decree which placed in his hands the fate of the republic.

Bonaparte, leaving his cabinet immediately, made known to his adherents the decree which invested him with the chief command; then placing himself at the head of the generals, of the superior officers, and of 1,600 cavalry, forming part of the garrison of Paris, which had just been brought him by Murat, he began his march towards the Champs Elysées, after desiring me to ascertain what resolution the directory had adopted upon learning the decree of removal.

I first repaired to my house, where I gave orders for placarding a proclamation, signed by myself, in the spirit of the revolution which had just commenced; I then directed my steps towards the Luxembourg.

It was a little after nine o'clock, and I found Moulins and Gohier, who with Barras formed the majority of the directory, completely ignorant of what was passing in Paris. Madame Tallien, in defiance of the orders given to refuse admission, had entered the apartments of Barras, whom she surprised in the bath; she was the first to inform him that Bonaparte had acted without him. "What can be done?" cried the indolent epicure—"that man (designating Bonaparte by a coarse epithet) has taken us all in." However, in the hope of negotiating, he sent to him his confidential secretary, Botot, modestly to inquire what he might expect from him. Botot found Bonaparte at the head of the troops, and, delivering his message, received this harsh reply—"Tell that man that I will not see him again!" He had just despatched Talleyrand and Bruix to him, for the purpose of forcing him to resign.

Having entered the apartments of the Luxembourg, I announced to the president the decree which transferred the sittings of the legislative corps to the Chateau of St. Cloud.—"I am much astonished," said Gohier peevishly to me, "that a minister of the directory should thus transform himself into a messenger of the council of the ancients."

"I considered it," replied I, "a part of my duty to give you intelligence of so important a resolution, and at the same

time I thought it expedient to come and receive the orders of the directory." "It was more your duty," rejoined Gohier in a faltering voice, "not to have let us remain in ignorance of the criminal intrigues which have produced such a decree; this is no doubt but the prelude to all that has been plotted against the government in the secret meetings which, in your quality of minister of the police, you ought to have discovered and made known to us." "But," returned I, "numbers of reports have been laid before the directory; I myself, finding I did not possess its confidence, employed indirect means to give it the necessary information; but the directory would never give credit to my warnings; besides is it not by its own members that this blow has been struck? The directors Sieyes and Roger-Ducos are already in coalition with the commission of the inspectors of the ancients." "The majority is at the Luxembourg," replied Gohier vehemently; "and if the directory have any orders to give, it will entrust the execution of them to men worthy of its confidence." Upon this I withdrew, and Gohier lost no time in summoning his two colleagues, Barras and Moulins. I had scarcely got into my carriage, when I saw the messenger of the ancients arrive, bringing to the president the communication of the decree of removal to St. Cloud. Gohier immediately repaired to Barras, and made him promise to meet him and Moulins in the hall of deliberations, to determine what steps were to be taken in the present conjuncture.

Such, however, was the perplexity of Barras, that he was incapable of adopting any vigorous resolution. In fact, he soon forgot his promise to Gohier when he saw the two agents, from Bonaparte, enter his apartment, Bruix and Talleyrand, who were commissioned to negotiate his retreat from the directory. They at first declared to him, that Bonaparte was determined to employ against him all the means of force in his power, should he attempt to make the least opposition to his plans. After having thus acted upon

his fears, the two adroit negotiators made him the most magnificent promises if he would consent to send in his resignation. Barras exclaimed against this treatment for some time, but at length yielded to the arguments of two artful men; they repeated to him the assurance that he should want for nothing that could contribute to a luxurious and tranquil life, free from the anxieties of a power he was no longer able to retain. Talleyrand had a letter already drawn up, which Barras was advised to address to the legislature, to notify his determination of retiring into private life. Thus placed between hope and fear, he ended by signing all that was required of him; and having thus placed himself at Bonaparte's mercy, he quitted the Luxembourg, and set off for his estate at Grosbois, escorted, and watched, by a detachment of dragoons.

Thus, by nine o'clock in the morning, no majority in the directory existed. About this time arrived Dubois de Crancé, who, persisting in his opposition, solicited from Gohier and Moulins an order for the arrest of Bonaparte, Talleyrand, Barras, and the principal conspirators, taking upon himself, as minister of war, to arrest Bonaparte and Murat on the road even to St. Cloud. Perhaps Moulins and Gohier, at length undeceived, would have yielded to the urgent remonstrances of Dubois de Crancé, had not Lagarde, chief secretary to the directory, and who had been gained over, declared that he would not countersign any resolution which should not have the sanction of the majority of the directory. "After all," said Gohier, rather damped by this observation, "how can there be any revolution at St. Cloud? I have here, in my quality of president, the seals of the republic." Moulins added, that Bonaparte was to dine with him at Gohier's, and that he would soon discover his real intentions.

I had for some time formed an opinion of the abilities of these men so little calculated to govern the state; nothing could equal their blindness and incapacity; it may justly be affirmed that they betrayed themselves.

Events already began to develop themselves. Bonaparte on horseback, followed by a numerous staff, first took the road to the Champs Elysées, where several corps were drawn up in battle array. After being acknowledged by them as their general, he proceeded to the Tuileries. The weather was extremely fine, and favoured the utmost display of military pomp in the Champs Elysées, on the quays, and in the national garden, which was in a moment transformed into a park of artillery, and where the crowd became excessive. Bonaparte was greeted at the Tuileries by the shouts of the citizens and the soldiery. Having presented himself with a military suite at the bar of the council of ancients, he eluded taking the constitutional oath; then descending from the château, he came to harangue the troops already disposed to obey him. There, he learnt that the directory was disorganized; that Sieyes and Roger-Ducos had sent in their resignation to the commission of the inspectors of the ancients; and that Barras having been circumvented, and breaking the majority, was on the point of subscribing to the conditions offered him. Passing on to the commissions of the assembled inspectors, the general there found Sieyes, Roger-Ducos, and several deputies of their party. Gohier, president of the directory, together with his colleague, Moulins, now arrived; both of whom refused their adhesion to what was taking place. An explanation took place between Gohier and Bonaparte. "My plans," said the latter, "are not hostile; the republic is in danger—it must be saved . . . *I will it!*" At this very moment, intelligence arrived that the faubourg Saint Antoine was rising at the instigation of Santerre, who was a relative of Moulins; Bonaparte, turning to him, and questioning him upon the subject, told him "that he would send a detachment of cavalry to shoot Santerre, if he dared to make the least stir." Moulins removed Bonaparte's apprehensions, and declared that Santerre could not assemble four men round him. He was, in fact, no longer the insti-

gator of the insurrection of 1792. I, myself, repeated the assurance that there would not be the least shadow of popular tumult; and said that I answered for the tranquillity of Paris. Gohier and Moulins, finding that the impulse was given, that the movement was irresistible, re-entered the Luxembourg to witness the defection of their guards. Both were there soon besieged by Moreau; for Bonaparte had already made certain military arrangements which placed in his power all the public authorities and establishments. Moreau was sent with a detachment to invest the Luxembourg; General Lannes was intrusted with a corps to guard the legislative body; Murat was despatched in all haste to occupy St. Cloud; while Serrurier was in reserve at the Point-du-Jour. All proceeded without any obstacle, or, at least, no opposition manifested itself in the capital; where, on the contrary, the revolution appeared to meet with general approbation.

In the evening a council was held at the commission of the inspectors, either for the purpose of preparing the public mind for the events which the next day was to produce, or to determine upon what was to be done at St. Cloud. I was present; and saw there, for the first time, undisguised, and in presence of each other, the two parties now united for the same object; but one of which appeared already to be alarmed at the ascendency of the military faction. At first, much discussion took place without understanding each other, and without coming to any determination. All that Bonaparte himself proposed, or that his brothers proposed for him, smacked of the dictatorship of the sabre. The legislators who had embraced his cause, took me aside, and made me the remark. "But," said I to them, "it is done; the military power is in the hands of General Bonaparte; you, yourselves, invested him with it, and you cannot proceed a step without his sanction." I soon perceived that the majority would willingly have receded, but they had no longer the power of so doing. The most timorous separated

themselves; and when we had got rid of the fearful, and those we could not depend upon, the establishment of three provisionary consuls was agreed upon, namely: Bonaparte, Sieyes, and Roger-Ducos. Sieyes then proposed to arrest about forty of the leaders who were hostile, or imagined to be so. I advised Bonaparte, through St. Réal, not to consent to it; and, in his first steps in the road to supreme power, not to render himself the instrument of the fury of a vindictive priest. He understood me, and alleged that the idea was premature; that there would be neither opposition nor resistance. "You will see that to-morrow at St. Cloud," said Sieyes, rather piqued.

I confess that I was not myself very confident respecting the issue of the next day. All that I had just heard, and all the information I could gather, agreed in that point, that the authors of this movement could no longer rely upon the majority among the members of the two councils; almost all being struck with the idea that the object was to destroy the constitution, in order to establish the military power. Even a great party of the initiated repelled the idea of a dictatorship, and flattered themselves with being able to avert it. But Bonaparte already exercised an immense influence both within and without the sphere of these tottering authorities. Versailles, Paris, Saint Cloud, and Saint Germain were favourable to his revolution; and his name among the soldiers operated as a talisman.

His privy council appointed as leaders to the deputies of the ancients, Regnier, Cornudet, Lemercier, and Fargues; and for guides to the deputies of the councils of the hundred, devoted to the party, Lucien Bonaparte, Boulay de la Meurthe, Emile Gaudin, Chazal and Cabanis. On their side, the opposing members of the two councils, united to the leaders of the *Manège*, passed the night in secret deliberations.

The next day (19th Brumaire, 10th November, 1799), at an early hour, the road from Paris to St. Cloud was covered

with troops, officers on horseback, spectators, coaches full of deputies, functionaries, and journalists. The hall for the two councils had just been hastily prepared. It was soon perceived, that the military party in the two councils was reduced to a small number of deputies, more or less ardent for the new order of things.

I remained at Paris, seated in my cabinet, with all my police in permanence; observing all that passed, receiving and examining myself every report which arrived. I had detached to St. Cloud a certain number of able and intelligent emissaries, for the purpose of placing themselves in contact with the persons who were pointed out to them; and other agents, who, being relieved every half-hour, came to inform me of the posture of affairs. I was thus made acquainted with the least incident, the most trifling circumstance that could affect the expected *dénouement;* I was decidedly of opinion that the sword alone could cut the knot.

The sitting opened at the five hundred, over which Lucien Bonaparte presided, by an artful speech of Emile Gaudin; the object of which was the appointment of a commission charged to present an immediate report upon the situation of the republic. Emile Gaudin, in his pre-arranged motion, also required that no measures whatever should be determined upon till the report of the proposed commission had been heard. Boulay de la Meurthe held the report in his hand, already prepared.

Scarcely, however, had Emile Gaudin concluded his motion, than a most dreadful tumult agitated the whole assembly. The cries of *Long live the Constitution! No Dictatorship! Down with the Dictator!* were heard on all sides. Upon the motion of Delbrel, seconded and supported by Grandmaison, the assembly, rising in a body at the cry of *Long live the Republic!* resolved that they would renew individually the oath of fidelity to the constitution. Those even who had come for the professed object of destroying it, took the oath.

The hall of the ancients was almost equally agitated ; but there the party of Sieyes and Bonaparte, who were anxious to accelerate the establishment of a provisionary government, had asserted as a fact, upon a false declaration of the Sieur Legarde, chief secretary of the directory, that all the directors had sent in their resignation. The oppositionists immediately demanded that successors should be named according to the prescribed forms. Bonaparte, informed of this double storm, thought it was time to appear upon the stage. Crossing the Salon de Mars, he entered the council of the ancients. There, in a verbose and disjointed speech, he declared that there was no longer any government, and that the constitution could no longer save the republic. Conjuring the council to hasten to adopt a new order of things, he protested that with respect to the magistracy they should appoint, his only wish was to be the arm commissioned to maintain and execute the orders of the council.

This speech, of which I only give the substance, was delivered in a broken and incoherent manner, which fully testified the agitation the general suffered, who sometimes addressed himself to the deputies, and then turned towards the soldiery, who remained at the end of the hall. Cries of *Long live Bonaparte*, and the acquiescence of the majority of the ancients having given him fresh courage, he withdrew, hoping to make a like impression upon the other council. He was not without some apprehensions, knowing what had passed there, and with what enthusiasm they had sworn fidelity to the republican constitution. A message to the directory had just been decreed there. A motion was being made to require from the ancients an explanation of the motives of its removal to St. Cloud, when they received the resignation of the director Barras transmitted to them by the other council. This resignation, of which, till then, they had been ignorant, caused a great astonishment throughout the assembly. It was considered as the result of some deep-laid intrigue. At the very moment the question

was being discussed whether the resignation was legal and according to the forms, Bonaparte arrived, followed by a platoon of grenadiers. Followed by four of them, he advanced, leaving the others at the entrance of the hall. Encouraged by the reception he had met with from the ancients, he flattered himself with the hope of calming the republican fever which agitated the five hundred. Scarcely, however, had he entered the hall, when the assembly were thrown into the utmost disorder. All the members standing up, expressed in loud cries the effect produced upon them by the appearance of the bayonets and of the general who thus advanced armed into the temple of the legislature. "You are violating the sanctuary of the laws, withdraw instantly!" exclaimed several deputies. "What are you doing, rash man?" cried Bigonnet to him. "Is it then for this you have been a conqueror?" said Destrem. In vain Bonaparte, who had ascended the tribune, endeavoured to stammer out a few sentences. On all sides he heard the cries repeated of *Long live the Constitution! Long live the Republic!* On all sides he was saluted by cries of *Down with the Cromwell! Down with the Dictator! Down with the Tyrant! Away with the Dictator!* Some of the most enraged deputies rushed upon him and pushed him back. "Will you then wage war against your own country?" cried Arena to him, showing him the point of his dagger. The grenadiers, seeing their general grow pale and tremble, crossed the room to form a rampart around him; Bonaparte threw himself in their arms, and they carried him away. Thus rescued, and almost frantic, he remounted his horse, set off at a gallop, and riding towards the bridge of Saint Cloud, cried aloud to his soldiers, "They have attempted my life! they have proposed to put me out of the protection of the laws! they do not know, then, that I am invulnerable, that I am the god of thunder."

Murat having joined him on the bridge, "It is not fitting," said he to him, "that he who has triumphed over

such powerful enemies should fear drivellers. . . . Come, general, courage, and the victory is our own!" Bonaparte then turned his horse's head and again presented himself before the soldiers, endeavouring to excite the generals to bring matters to a conclusion by a *coup de main*. But Lannes, Serrurier, and Murat himself, seemed but little disposed to direct the bayonets against the legislature.

In the meantime the most horrible tumult reigned in the hall. Firm in the president's chair, Lucien made vain efforts to re-establish tranquillity, earnestly entreating his colleagues to allow his brother to be recalled and heard, and obtaining no other answer than, *Outlawry! Let the outlawry of General Bonaparte be put to the vote!* They even went so far as to call upon him to put to the vote the motion of outlawry against his brother. Lucien, indignant, quitted the chair, abdicated the presidency, and laid aside its badge. He had scarcely descended from the tribune, when some grenadiers arrived, and carried him out with them. Lucien, astonished, learnt that it was by order of his brother, who was anxious for his assistance, being determined upon employing force to dissolve the legislature. Such was the advice of Sieyes; seated in a chaise drawn by six post-horses, he awaited the issue of the event at the gates of St. Cloud. There was no longer time for hesitation. Pale and trembling, the most zealous partisans of Bonaparte were petrified, whilst the most timid among them already declared against his enterprise. Jourdan and Augereau were observed standing aloof, watching the favourable moment for drawing the grenadiers into the popular party. But Sieyes, Bonaparte, and Talleyrand, who had come to Saint Cloud with Rœderer, were of opinion, as well as myself, that the party would want both *an arm and a head*. Lucien, inspiring Bonaparte with all his energy, mounted a horse, and in his quality of president, required the assistance of force to dissolve the assembly. The grenadiers in close columns, with Murat at their head, followed him into the hall of the five hundred,

whilst Colonel Moulins caused the charge to be beaten. The hall is invaded amidst the noise of drums and the shouts of the soldiers, the deputies escape out of the windows, throw away their togas, and disperse themselves. Such was the result of the day of Saint Cloud (19th Brumaire, 10th November). Bonaparte was particularly indebted for it to the energy of his brother Lucien, to the decision of Murat, and perhaps to the weakness of the generals, who, though opposed to him, dared not openly show their hostility.

But it became necessary to render national an anti-popular event, in which force had triumphed over a representative rabble, alike incapable of showing either a real orator or chief. It was requisite to sanction what history will call the triumph of military usurpation.

Sieyes, Talleyrand, Bonaparte, Rœderer, Lucien, and Boulay de la Meurthe, who were the soul of the enterprise, decided that the deputies of their party, who were wandering in the apartments and galleries of St. Cloud, should be instantly assembled. Boulay and Lucien went in search of them, gathered together twenty or thirty, and constituted them the council of five hundred. From this mock assembly a decree was issued, the burden of which was, that General Bonaparte, the general officers, and the troops which seconded him, had deserved well of their country. The leaders then agreed upon asserting in the next day's newspaper, that several deputies had endeavoured to assassinate Bonaparte, and that the majority of the council had been overruled by a minority of assassins.

Then came the promulgation of the act of the 19th Brumaire, likewise concerted among the leaders, to serve as a legal foundation for the new revolution. This act abolished the directory ; instituted a consular executive commission, composed of Sieyes, Roger-Ducos, and Bonaparte ; adjourned the two councils, and excluded from them sixty-two members of the popular party, among whom figured General

Jourdan; it besides appointed a legislative commission of fifty members chosen equally from both councils, whose duty it was to prepare a new draught of the constitution of the state. Upon being brought from the assembly of the five hundred to the council of the ancients, to be transformed into a law, this act was only voted for by the minority, the majority maintaining a mournful silence. Thus the intermediary establishment of the new order of things was converted into a law by some sixty of the members of the legislature, who declared themselves to be duly qualified for the employment of ministers, diplomatic agents, and delegates of the consular commission.

Bonaparte, with his two colleagues, came into the council of the ancients to take the oaths, and on the 11th of November, about five o'clock in the morning, the new government quitting St. Cloud, came to install itself in the palace of the Luxembourg. I had foreseen, that all the authority of this executive triumvirate would fall into the hands of him who had already been invested with the military power. Of this, there was no longer any doubt after the first sitting which the three consuls held together that very night. There, Bonaparte took possession of the president's armchair, which neither Sieyes nor Roger-Ducos dared to dispute with him. Roger, already gained over, declared, that Bonaparte alone could save the country, and that he would henceforth follow his opinion in everything. Sieyes sat silent, biting his lips. Bonaparte, knowing him to be avaricious, abandoned to him the private treasury of the directory; it contained 800,000 francs, which Sieyes immediately seized, and adopting the lion's mode of division, left only 100,000 francs to his colleague Roger-Ducos. This trifling douceur calmed his ambition a little, for he expected that Bonaparte would turn his attention to war, and would leave the civil affairs in his hands. But hearing Bonaparte, at their first sitting, treat upon the finances, the administration, the laws, the army, politics in general, and discuss these various subjects with

much ability, he said, upon entering his house, in presence of Talleyrand, Boulay, Cabanis, Rœderer, and Chazal: "Gentlemen, you have a master."

It was easy to perceive that a suspicious and avaricious priest, surfeited with gold, would not dare to contend long with a general, young, active, possessed of immense renown, and who, in fact, had already made himself master of power. Besides, Sieyes possessed none of those qualities which could have ensured him a great influence with a proud and warlike nation. His title alone, of priest, had made him unpopular with the army; here artifice could do nothing against force. In wishing to make a trial of it with respect to me, Sieyes failed.

In the second sitting, held by the consuls, the change of the ministry was discussed. The chief secretary of the executive commission was first named, and the choice fell upon Maret. Berthier was the first called to be minister at war; he replaced Dubois de Crancé, whom Bonaparte never pardoned, having opposed him. Robert Lindet yielded the finance to Gaudin, formerly a *premier commis*[1] devoted to Bonaparte; Cambacérès was left at the head of justice. In the ministry of marine, Bourdon was replaced by Forfait; the geometrician Laplace succeeded Quinette in the home department; the foreign affairs were reserved *in petto* for Talleyrand, and in the interim the Westphalian Reinhard served him as a cloak. When they came to the police, Sieyes, alleging some insidious reasons, proposed that I should be replaced by Alquier, who was his creature. Bonaparte objected that I had conducted myself very well on the 18th Brumaire, and that I had given sufficient proofs. In fact, not only I had favoured the development of his incipient dispositions, but had also, at the critical moment,

[1] The title of *premier commis* was formerly given, in France, to those persons who, under the secretary of state, were at the head of the different offices, into which every ministerial department is divided. Those persons are now more properly called *chefs de division.—English Editor.*

succeeded in paralysing the efforts of several of the deputies and generals who might have impeded the success of the day. Scarcely had the intelligence of it reached me, than I had caused to be placarded, that very night, all over Paris, a proclamation full of attachment and obedience to the saviour of the country. I was retained in an office, without doubt, the most important of all, in spite of Sieyes, and in defiance of the intrigues which had been played off against me.

Bonaparte judged better of the state of things; he felt that he had many obstacles yet to overcome, that it was not sufficient to vanquish, but that he must subdue: that it was not too much to have at his command a minister experienced against the anarchists. He was equally convinced that his interest rendered it imperative upon him to lean for support upon a man whom he believed most capable of keeping him on his guard against a cheat who had become his colleague. The confidential report which I placed in his hands the very evening of his installation, at the Luxembourg, had convinced him that the police was as clear as it was quick-sighted.

Sieyes, in the meantime, who was anxious for proscriptions, was continually exclaiming against such as he called opposers and anarchists: he told Bonaparte, that the public opinion, empoisoned by the Jacobins, became detestable; that the police bulletins proved it, and that severe examples were necessary. "See," said he, "in what colours they have painted the glorious day of St. Cloud! To believe them, its only springs, its only lever, were artifice, falsehood, and audacity. The consular commission is nothing but a triumvirate invested with a terrific dictatorship, which corrupts the better to enslave; the act of the 19th Brumaire is the work of a few deserters, abandoned by their colleagues, and who, though deprived of a majority, are not less eager to sanction the usurpation. You should hear what they say of you, of me! We must not suffer ourselves to be thus

dragged through the mire, for if once debased, we are lost. In the Faubourg St. Germain, some say that it is the military faction which has just snatched the reins of government out of the hands of the lawyers; others assert, that General Bonaparte is about to perform the part of Monk. Thus by some we are classed with the Bourbons, and by others among the most furious of Robespierre's creatures. Severity is necessary to prevent public opinion from being left to the mercy of the royalists and anarchists. These must be struck first. It is always in its *début* that a new power should show its force." Upon concluding this artful speech, Sieyes insinuated that the head of the police should be required to put in execution a measure highly essential to the public weal, and the general security; he conquered Bonaparte's resistance. It had been declared, on the 19th Brumaire, that there should be no more oppressive acts, no more lists of proscription, and yet, on the 26th, I was required to furnish names in order to form a list of those to be proscribed. That same day, the consuls issued a decree condemning, without previous trial, fifty-five of the principal opposers to banishment; thirty-seven to French Guiana, and twenty-two to the Island of Oleron. On these lists, names, blasted and odious, were seen followed by those of amiable and esteemed citizens. What I had prognosticated to the consuls came to pass; the voice of the public, highly, and in the strongest manner, disapproved of this impolitic and useless proscription.

They were compelled to yield, but first commenced with making exceptions. I entreated and obtained the liberty of several proscribed deputies. I represented how much France and the army would be shocked at seeing people persecuted on account of their opinions—Jourdan, for example, who had gained the battle of Fleurus, and whose probity was immaculate. The proscriber Sieyes, seeing Bonaparte shaken, did not dare to prosecute the execution of an odious measure, which he had taken care to impute to me. It was

withdrawn, and they contented themselves, upon my proposition, with placing the opponents under the eyes of the high police. The three consuls then felt how necessary it was for them to consult and gain public opinion : many of their acts were calculated to deserve the confidence of the people. They lost no time in revoking the law respecting hostages and the compulsory loans, which were so obnoxious.

A few days sufficed to make it certain, that the transactions of the 18th Brumaire had obtained the consent of the nation. This has now become an historical truth : it was at that time a fact which decided the struggle between the government of the many, and that of a single person.

The strict republicans, the desponding friends of liberty, alone saw with regret Bonaparte's accession to the supreme power. They at first drew from it the most gloomy consequences and anticipations ; the sequel has proved they were right ; we shall see why, and shall assign the reasons of it.

I had declared myself against the proscriptions, and against all other general measures. Certain, henceforth, of my credit, and finding myself firmly established in the ministry, I endeavoured to impart to the general police a character of dignity, justice, and moderation, which, to render more lasting, has not depended upon myself. Under the directory, the women of the town were employed in the vile trade of *espionnage*. I forbade the use of such disgraceful instruments : wishing to give to the scrutinizing eye of the police the direction of watchfulness only, not of accusation.

I also caused misfortune to be respected by obtaining an alleviation of the fate of emigrants shipwrecked upon the northern coasts of France, among whom were persons belonging to the flower of the ancient nobility. I was not satisfied with this first attempt towards a return to national humanity ; I made a report to the consuls, in which I solicited the liberty of all those emigrants whom the tempest

had cast upon the shores of their country. I forced from them this act of clemency, which, from that time, gained me the confidence of the royalists disposed to submit to government.

My two instructions to the bishops and prefects, which were published at that time, produced likewise a great sensation upon the public. They were the more remarked, as I spoke a language in them which had fallen into disuse; that of reason and toleration, which I have always considered to be very compatible with the policy of a government sufficiently strong to be just. These two instructions were, however, differently interpreted. In the opinion of some, they bore the stamp of that foresight and of that profound art of influencing the human heart, so essential to a statesman; according to others, they tended to substitute morality for religion, and the police for justice. But the supporters of this last opinion did not reflect upon the circumstances and times in which we were placed. My two circulars are still extant; they are in print; let them be read again, and it will be seen that moral courage, and fixed principles, were necessary to render the doctrines and sentiments therein expressed palatable.

Thus, salutary modifications and a less uncertain tranquillity were the first pledges offered by the new government to the expectations of the French. They applauded the sudden elevation of the illustrious general, who, in the administration of the state, manifested equal vigour and prudence. With the exception of the demagogues, each party persuaded itself that this new revolution would turn to its advantage. Such especially was the dream of the royalists; they saw in Bonaparte the Monk of the expiring revolution, a dream which was particularly favourable to the views of the first consul. Fatigued and disgusted with the revolution, the moderate party itself mingling its views with those of the counter-revolutionists, openly wished for the modification of the republican régime, and its amalgamation with

a mixed monarchy. But the time had not yet arrived for transforming the democracy into a republican monarchy; for this could only be obtained by the fusion of all parties, which was still very distant. The new administration, on the contrary, favoured a kind of moral reaction against the revolution and the severity of its laws. The writings most in vogue tended to royalism; and to judge from the clamours of the republicans, we were rapidly approaching it. These clamours were accredited by imprudent royalists, and by works which recalled the recollection and the distresses of the Bourbons—*Irma*, for example, which at that time was the rage in Paris, because it was supposed to cantain an account of the affecting misfortunes of Madame Royale.[1]

At any other time the police would have caused a similar work to be seized; but I was obliged to sacrifice public opinion to reasons of state, and those reasons required that a bait should be offered to the royalists. The maxims and interests of the revolution had, however, still too much life to be injured with impunity. I thought it my duty to cool the hopes of the counter-revolutionists, and to raise the courage of the republicans. I observed to the consul that there were still great cautions to be observed; that having manœuvred with men sincerely attached to the republican forms, and to the liberties of the public, the army itself having imbibed the same sentiments, he could not separate

[1] The history of Irma appeared under the form of an allegory. The scenes were laid in Asia, and all the names were changed; but the key to them was easily found through their anagrams. This clever manner of publishing the history of the misfortunes of the house of Bourbon excited curiosity in a high degree, and warmly interested the public. The work was devoured; by following the events and arriving at the catastrophes, the names were easily guessed at. Under a false appearance of liberty, the first consul permitted everything to be published respecting the revolution that could disparage it; then successively appeared the memoirs of the Marquis de Bouillé, of Bertrand de Moleville, of the Princess Lamballe, those of the Mesdames of France, the History of Madame Elizabeth, the *Cimetière* de la Madeleine, &c. But this toleration ceased as soon as the first consul found himself securely seated, as will be seen in the sequel of these memoirs.—*Note of the French Editor.*

himself without danger, either from his own party or the army; besides that, it was necessary for him to quit a provisionary, and create for himself a permanent establishment.

At that period the attention of government was deeply engaged on the preparatory work of two intermediary legislative committees. That of the five hundred was conducted by Lucien, Boulay, Jacqueminot, and Daunou; that of the ancients by Lemercier, Lebrun, and Regnier. Lebrun's powers were unquestionably the greatest; Bonaparte consulted him and received his advice with respect. The object was to discuss, at a general meeting, the new project of social organization which Sieyes was anxious to present, in place of the constitution of the year III., whose obsequies he was eager to see. Sieyes, with whose real thoughts Bonaparte was acquainted, assumed an air of great mystery; he said he had nothing ready; that he had not time to arrange his papers. He affected silence; in this he resembled those fashionable authors, who, eaten up with the desire of reading their works, first, through affectation or fashion, suffer themselves to be entreated, before they yield to the curiosity of the public, often inclined to be satirical. I was commissioned to penetrate his mystery. I employed Réal, who, using much address, with an appearance of great good-nature, discovered the bases of Sieyes' project, by getting Chénier, one of his confidants, to chatter, upon rising from a dinner at which wines and other intoxicating liquors had not been spared.

Upon this information, a secret council was held, to which I was called; Bonaparte, Cambacérès, Lebrun, Lucien, Joseph, Berthier, Réal, Regnault, and Rœderer were present. There we discussed on a counter-project, and the conduct to be pursued by Bonaparte in the general conferences which were impatiently awaited.

At length, towards the middle of December, the three consuls and the two legislative commissions assembled in Bonaparte's apartment. The conferences commenced at

nine o'clock in the evening, and were prolonged far into the night. Daunou acted as secretary. Sieyes at the first sitting did not utter a word; at length, pressed on all sides, he yielded, and then gave several detached parts of his theories, contained in separate books. With the tone of an oracle, he successively explained to us the bases of his favourite constitution. It created a *Tribunat*, composed of one hundred members, who were to discuss the laws; a legislative body more numerous, whose province was to receive or reject them by vote, without any oral discussion; and lastly, a senate composed of members elected for life, and charged with the more important office of watching over the preservation of the laws and the constitution of the state. All these ground-works, against which Bonaparte made no serious objections, were successively adopted. As to the government, he invested it with the power of applying the laws, and, for this purpose, created a council of state, charged with drawing up and improving the projects and regulations of the public administration. It was known that the government of Sieyes was to terminate in a point, in a species of monarchical pinnacle, erected upon republican foundations; an idea to which he had been for a long time attached: an attention and even impatient curiosity were manifested, till at last he uncovered the capital of his constitutional edifice. What was Sieyes' proposal? *A grand elector*, chosen for life by the conservative senate, sitting at Versailles, representing the majority of the nation, with a revenue of six millions, a guard of three thousand men, and having no other office than to appoint two consuls, one for *peace*, and another for *war*, both independent of each other in the exercise of their functions. And this *grand elector*, in case of a bad choice, could be *absorbed* by the senate, which was invested with the right of calling into its own body, without explaining its reasons, every depositary of public authority, the two consuls and the grand elector himself; the latter thus becoming a member of the senate,

would no longer have any direct share in the operations of government.

Here Bonaparte could no longer contain himself; rising up and bursting into a loud laugh, he took the paper from the hands of Sieyes, and, with one dash of his pen, *sabred* what he called metaphysical nonsense. Sieyes, who generally sulked, instead of resisting, objections, defended, nevertheless, his grand elector; and said that, after all, a king ought to be nothing else. Bonaparte replied, with much warmth, that he mistook the shadow for the substance, the abuse for the principle; that there could not be in the government any active power without an independence founded upon, and defined by, prerogative. He also made several other preconcerted objections, to which Sieyes replied very lamely; and getting gradually warmer, he concluded with apostrophizing his colleague thus:—"How could you suppose, citizen Sieyes, that a man of honour, talent, and some ability in affairs, would ever consent to be nothing but a hog fatting on a few millions in the royal palace of Versailles?" Amused by this sally, the members of the conference began to laugh; and Sieyes, who had already showed indecision, remained confounded, and his *grand elector* sunk for ever.

It is certain that Sieyes concealed some deep projects in this ridiculous form of government, and that had it been adopted, he would have had the upper hand in its execution. It was he doubtless whom the senate was to have nominated *grand elector*, and he would have appointed Bonaparte consul for war, leaving to circumstances to decide whether he should *absorb* him. By this means, everything would have remained in his own hands, and it would have been easy for him, by causing himself to be *absorbed*, to have caused some other personage to be called to the head of the government, and to have transformed, by a transition artfully prepared, an elective executive power into an hereditary royalty, in favour of any dynasty it might have suited him to establish,

in the interests of a revolution of which he was the *hierophant.*

But his circuitous and suspicious proceedings brought against him the determined resistance of the consul, which he ought to have expected ; and, thence, the overthrow of all his projects. He had not, however, neglected to secure, as will shortly be seen, a safe retreat against all the shafts of adverse fortune.

It was not sufficient to do away with the project of Sieyes ; it was necessary, besides, that the adherents and intimate advisers of the General-consul should cause some mode of government to be adopted which would secure the power in their own hands. All was ready. But notwithstanding the personal retreat of Sieyes, the party who were attached to his plans, the rejection of which had disappointed them, made a new attack, and proposed the adoption of forms purely republican. To this was opposed the creation of a president, similar to that of the United States, for ten years, free in his choice of ministers, of his council of state, and all the members of the administration. Others, who had been tutored, advised to disguise the sole magistrateship of the president ; for which purpose they offered to conciliate conflicting opinions, by forming a government of three consuls, of which two should only be advisers as occasion required (*conseillers nécessaires*). But when they tried to have it decided, that there should be a first consul, invested with supreme power, having the right of nominating to, and dismissing from all appointments, and that the two other consuls should only have consulting voices, then objections arose. Chazal, Daunou, Courtois, Chénier, and many others besides, insisted upon constitutional limits ; they represented, that if General Bonaparte took upon himself the supreme magistracy, without a previous election, he would show the ambition of a usurper, and justify the opinion of those who had asserted that the events of the 18th Brumaire were solely intended for his own aggrandizement. Making a last

effort to remove him, they offered him the dignity of generalissimo, with the power of making peace and war, and of treating with foreign powers. "I will remain at Paris," replied Bonaparte, with vivacity, and biting his nails; "I will remain at Paris; I am consul." Then Chénier, breaking silence, spoke of liberty, of the republic, of the necessity of putting some restrictions upon power, insisting, with much energy and courage, upon the adoption of the measure of *absorption* into the senate. "That shall not be!" cried Bonaparte, in a rage, and stamping with his feet, "we will rather wade to our knees in blood!" At these words, which changed into a scene a deliberation hitherto kept within the bounds of moderation, every one remained speechless; and the majority, being overcome, placed the power, not into the hands of three consuls, the second and third having only consulting voices, but into the hands of a single one, nominated for ten years, re-eligible, promulgating laws, appointing and dismissing, at his will, all the members of the executive power, making peace and war, and, in fact, nominating himself. In fact, Bonaparte, in avoiding to establish the senate, as a prealable institution, would not even be first consul by the act of the senators.

Whether from spite or pride, Sieyes refused to be one of the accessory consuls; this was expected, and the choice, which was already made by Bonaparte *in petto*, fell upon Cambacérès and Lebrun, who differed but very little in politics. The one, a member of the convention, having voted for the death of the king, had embraced the revolution in its principles as well as its consequences, but like a cold egotist; the other, brought up in the maxims of ministerial despotism, under the Chancellor Maupeou, whose intimate secretary he was, caring little about theories, attached himself solely to the action of power; the one, a powerless defender of the principles of the revolution and of its interests, was inclined for the return of distinctions, honours, and abuses; the other was a warmer and a juster

advocate of social order, of morals, and of public faith. Both were enlightened, and men of probity, although avaricious.

As to Sieyes, having been nominated a senator, he concurred with Cambacérès and Lebrun in organizing the senate, of which he was first president. As a reward for his docility in resigning the helm of affairs into the hands of the General-consul, he was voted the estate of Crosne, a magnificent present worth a million of francs, independent of twenty-five thousand francs a year, as senator, and exclusive of his *pot de vin*, as director, which amounted to six-hundred thousand francs, and which he called his *poire pour la soif*. From that time, fallen from all consideration, and sunk in secret sensuality, he was politically dead.

A decree of the 20th November ordained that the two preceding legislative councils should assemble, of their own right, in February, 1800. In order to elude with more effect this decree, the execution of which would have compromised the consular dignity, a new constitution was submitted to the acceptance of the French people. The object was no longer to collect them in primary assemblies by consecrating again the democratic principle; but to open registers in all the government departments, and public offices—in which the citizens were to inscribe their votes. These votes amounted to three millions and more; and I can affirm that there was no deception in the computation, so favourably received was the revolution *de Brumaire* by the great majority of Frenchmen.

Nine times, in less than seven years, since the fall of the royal authority, the nation had seen the helm pass into different hands, and the vessel of state dashed upon new shoals. But this once the pilot inspired more universal confidence. He was considered to be steady and skilful, and his government, in other respects, assumed the forms of stability.

From the day on which Bonaparte declared himself first

consul, and was recognized in that character, he judged that his reign was substantially to date from that period, and he did not disguise that opinion in the internal action of his government. Republicanism was observed to lose every day some portion of its gloomy austerity, and conversions in favour of unity of power were seen to become frequent.

The consul induced us to believe, and we willingly persuaded ourselves, that this necessary unity in the government would cause no encroachment on the republican structure; and, in fact, up to the period of the battle of Marengo, the forms of the republic still subsisted; no person dared to stray from the language and the spirit of that government. Bonaparte, when first-consul, constrained himself to appear in no other light than as magistrate of the people and chief of the army. He assumed the reins of government on the 25th of December, and his name was from that time inscribed at the head of all public acts; an innovation unknown since the birth of the republic. Till then the chief magistrates of the state had inhabited the palace of the Luxembourg; none of them had yet dared to invade the abode of the kings. Bonaparte, with more assurance, quitted the Luxembourg, and went in state, accompanied by great military display, to occupy the Tuileries, which became from that time the residence of the first consul. The senate held its sittings at the Luxembourg, and the tribunal at the Palais Royal.

This magnificence pleased the nation, which approved of being represented in a manner more suited to her dignity. Splendour and etiquette resumed a portion of their empire. Paris beheld its circles, its balls, and sumptuous entertainments revived. Observant of forms, punctilious even in matters of public decorum, Bonaparte, discarding the former connexions of Josephine, and even his own, excluded from the palace those females of decried or suspected morals, who had figured in the most brilliant circles, as well as in the

intrigues carried on at the Luxembourg, under the reign of the directory.

The commencement of a new reign is almost always auspicious ; it was the case with the consulship, which was marked by the reform of a great number of abuses, by acts of wisdom and humanity, and by the system of justice and moderation which the consuls adopted. The recall of a portion of the deputies, against whom were levelled the decrees of the 19th Fructidor, was an act of wisdom, decision, and equity. The same may be said of the measure for closing the list of emigrants. The consuls permitted the erasure of a great number of the distinguished members of the constituent assembly. I had the gratification of recalling and erasing from the fatal list the celebrated Cazalès, as well as his old colleague Malouet, a man of real talent and strict integrity. As well as myself, the ex-elector Malouet had formerly been a professor at the Oratoire, and I entertained for him an extreme regard. It will be seen that he repaid my friendship with sincere and constant affection.

The re-organization of the judicial system, and the establishment of prefectures, marked also the auspicious opening of the consulship, equally happy in the choice of the new authorities. But, to confess the truth, this agreeable scene was soon darkened. "I will not," said Bonaparte, one evening to me, "I will not govern, with the weakness and indulgence of a debonnair chief: we make little progress in the pacification of the west; there is too much liberty and assurance in the writings of the day." The awaking moment was terrible. The execution of young Toustain, that of the Count De Frotté and his companions in arms, the suppression of some of the journals, the threatening style of the last proclamations, whilé they chilled both republicans and royalists with dismay, dissipated through nearly the whole of France the fond hopes which had been cherished of an equitable and humane government.

I made the first consul feel the necessity of dispersing these clouds. He relaxed a little ; gained over the emigrants by favours and employments ; restored the churches to the Catholic worship ; kept the republicans in a state of minority, but without persecuting them ; he declared himself, at the same time, the enemy of speculators on the government revenues.

All the sources of credit were either dried up or destroyed, at the accession of the consul, by the effect of the confusion, the dilapidations, and the squandering which had crept into all the branches of the public administration and revenue. It was requisite to create new resources in order to meet the expenses of war and of all the parts of the service. Twelve millions were borrowed of the commercial interest of Paris ; twenty-four millions were obtained from the sale of the domains of the house of Orange ; and, at length, one hundred and fifty millions of *bons de rescription de rachat de rentes*, were put into circulation. In decreeing these measures, the first consul felt how difficult it would be for him to extricate himself from the hands of the money contractors ; he held them in horror. The following note, of which he subsequently gave me a copy, prejudiced and singularly exasperated him against our principal bankers and brokers. This is the note :—

" The individuals whose names are subscribed, are masters of the public fortune ; they give the impulse to the course of public effects, and they possess among themselves a capital of about one hundred millions (£4,000,000 sterling) ; they moreover dispose of a credit amounting to eighty millions (£3,200,000) ; namely, Armand Séguin, Vanderberg, Launoy, Collot, Hinguerlot, Ouvrard, the brothers Michel, Bastide, Marion, and Récamier. The partisans of Haller the Swiss have triumphed, because that Swiss, whose plan of finance the first consul does not choose to adopt, predicted the fall which has, at this moment, taken place."

Bonaparte could not bear the idea of fortunes so suddenly

made and so gigantic; it seemed as if he feared to be subjected to them. He generally regarded them as the disgraceful results of public dilapidation and usury. He had accomplished the events of the 18th of Brumaire, with the money which Collot had lent him, and this idea humiliated him. Joseph Bonaparte himself could not have purchased Morfontaine, had not Collot lent him two millions (£80,000). "Yes," said Bonaparte to his brother, "you will play the lord with people's money; but the whole weight of the usury will fall upon me."

I had much trouble, as well as the Count Lebrun, to mitigate his indignation against bankers and contractors, and to divert him from the violent measures which, even then, he wished to apply against them. He understood little of the theory of public credit; and it was obvious that he felt a secret inclination to manage the money matters amongst us, according to the system of oppression adopted in Egypt, Turkey, and throughout the East. He was, however, compelled to have recourse to Vanderberg in order to open the campaign; he contracted with him for the supply of the army. His suspicions extended to all the secret parts of government. I was always the person on whom devolved the charge of verifying or examining the secret notes which intriguers and place-hunters never failed to address to him. Some idea of the delicacy of my functions may be formed from that circumstance; I was thus the only person who could correct his prejudices or conquer them, by placing daily under his eye, by means of my police bulletins, the expression of all kinds of opinions and ideas, and the summary of such secret circumstances, a knowledge of which interested the safety and tranquillity of the state. In order not to exasperate him, I took care to draw a separate account of those things which might have annoyed him in his conferences and communications with the two other consuls. My communications with him were too frequent not to be of a dangerous nature. But I main-

tained a tone of truth and frankness tempered with zeal, and that zeal was sincere. I found in that extraordinary (*unique*) man precisely all that was wanted in order to regulate and maintain that unity of power in the executive authority, without which everything would have fallen back into disorder and chaos. But I found also that he possessed violent passions, and a natural tendency to despotism, having their source in his disposition and martial habits. I flattered myself with being able successfully to restrain it by the dikes of prudence and reason, and I pretty often succeeded beyond my hopes.

At that period, Bonaparte had no more cause to fear any material opposition in the interior of France, except that of some royalist bands which still retained their arms in the departments of the East, and chiefly in Morbihan. In Europe, his power was neither so well consolidated nor so undisputed. He was perfectly aware, and beforehand, that he could only strike its roots deeply by new victories. Of these he was therefore greedy.

But France was then emerging from a crisis ; her finances were exhausted ; if anarchy had been quelled, it was not so with royalism ; and the republican spirit was fermenting secretly beyond the sphere of power. As to the French armies, notwithstanding their recent successes in Holland and Switzerland, they were not yet in a condition to take again the offensive. The whole of Italy was lost ; even the Apennines no longer stopped the soldiers of Austria.

What then did Bonaparte do ? By the excellent advice of his minister for foreign affairs, he sagaciously availed himself of the passions of the Emperor Paul the First, in order to detach him entirely from the coalition ; he next made his appearance on the ostensible stage of European diplomacy, by publishing his famous letter to the King of England ; it contained overtures offered in an unusual form. In that circumstance, the first consul saw the double advantage of obtaining credit for his pacific intentions, and of

persuading France, in the event of the refusal which he expected, that in order to obtain that peace, which was the object of all his wishes, he must have gold, steel, and men.

When one day, on coming out of his private cabinet council, he told me, with an air of inspiration, that he felt assured of re-conquering Italy in three months, at first I saw a little presumption and boasting in these words, and yet they persuaded me. Carnot, who, a short time previously, had become minister of war, perceived as well as myself, that there was one thing which Bonaparte understood above all others, and that was the practical science of war. But when Bonaparte positively told me, that he intended, before his departure for the army, that all the departments of the West should be tranquil, and when he pointed out means to obtain this end, which coincided with my own views, I saw that he was not only a warrior, but also a shrewd politician ; and I seconded his exertions with a good fortune, for which he acknowledged his obligations.

We were, however, unable to break up the royalist league, except by means of the great *primum mobile*, subornation. In this respect, the *curé* Bernier, and two viscountesses, served us most effectually in accrediting the opinion that Bonaparte was exerting himself to replace the Bourbons on the throne. The bait took so well, that the king himself, then at Mittau, deceived by his correspondents in Paris, and thinking that the favourable moment was come for him to claim his crown, forwarded to the consul Lebrun, through the Abbé de Montesquiou, his secret agent, a letter addressed to Bonaparte, in which, in the noblest expressions, he endeavoured to convince him of the honour he would acquire by replacing him on the throne of his ancestors. "I can do nothing for France without you," said that prince, "and yourself cannot contribute to the welfare of France without me. Hasten, then * * * *."

At the same time, the Count d'Artois sent the Duchess de Guiche, a lady rich in the charms of her person and

mind, from London, in order, on his side, to open a parallel negotiation through Josephine, who was considered as the tutelary angel of the royalists and emigrants. She obtained some interviews, and I was informed of them by Josephine herself, who, in conformity to our conditions, cemented by a thousand francs per day (£40), instructed me in all that passed in the interior of the château.

I confess that I was mortified in not receiving from Bonaparte any instruction respecting circumstances so essential. I therefore went to work; I had recourse to extraordinary means; and I learnt, in a positive manner, the proceedings of the Abbé de Montesquiou with the consul Lebrun. I made it the subject of a memorial, which I addressed to the first consul, in which I mentioned equally the mission and the proceedings of the Duchess de Guiche. I represented to him, that, in sanctioning such negotiations, he gave occasion to suspect that he sought to secure for himself, in case of a reverse of fortune, a brilliant means both of fortune and security; but that he miscalculated greatly, if, indeed, it were possible for a mind so magnanimous as his, to stoop to so erroneous a policy; that he was, essentially, the man of the revolution, and could be no other; and that the Bourbons could by no chance reascend the throne, except by reaching it over his dead body.

This memorial, which I took care to draw up and write myself, proved to him that nothing which concerned the secrets and safety of the state could escape my notice. It produced the result which I expected; that is to say, it made a vivid impression on the mind of Bonaparte. The Duchess de Guiche was dismissed with an order to repair without delay to London; and the consul Lebrun was reprimanded for having received a letter from the king, through an underhanded channel. My credit from that time assumed the solidity which befitted the eminence and importance of my functions.

Other scenes were about to commence; but they were

scenes of blood and carnage on new fields of battle. Moreau, who had passed the Rhine on the 25th April, 1800, had already defeated the Austrians in three encounters before the 10th May ; when Bonaparte, between the 16th and 20th, in an enterprise worthy of Hannibal, passed the Great St. Bernard, at the head of the whole army of reserve. Surprising the enemy, which, either through negligence or delusion, persisted, on the Var and toward Genoa, in invading the frontier of France, he directed his march upon Milan, through the valley of Aoste and Piedmont, and arrived in time to cut off the communication of the Austrian army, commanded by Melas. The Austrian, disconcerted, concentrated himself beneath the cannon of Alessandria, at the confluence of the Tanaro and the Bormida, and, after some partial defeats, courageously advanced to meet the first consul, who, on his side, was marching in the same direction.

The decisive crisis was approaching, and kept the public mind in suspense. Feelings and opinions were in a state of ferment in Paris, especially among the two extreme parties, popular and royalist. The moderate republicans were no less moved. They felt a kind of misgiving in seeing at the head of the government, a general more disposed to employ the cannon and the sabre than the cap of liberty or the scales of justice. The malcontents cherished the hope, that the individual, whom they already called the Cromwell of France, would be arrested in his course, and that owing his elevation to war, he would owe to war his destruction.

Things were in this state, when, on the evening of the 20th June, two commercial expresses arrived with news from the army, announcing that on the 14th instant, at five o'clock in the evening, the battle fought near Alessandria had turned to the disadvantage of the consular army, which was retreating ; but that the contest was still continued. This intelligence, diffused with the rapidity of lightning throughout all classes, equally interested, produced upon the

public mind the same effect as the electric spark does upon the human body. People are seen to seek each other, to meet together; these hasten to Chénier's, others to Courtois', those to the Staël coterie; some to Sieyes', and others to Carnot's. Every one says that the republic in peril must be saved from the Corsican's claws; that, in re-conquering it, a plan more congenial with wisdom and liberty must be adopted; that a chief magistrate is necessary, but he must not be an arrogant dictator, nor the emperor of the soldiery. Then, every look, every thought is fixed upon Carnot, the minister of the war department.

I was, at the same moment, informed of the news, and of the public ferment which it occasioned. I hastened instantly to the two consuls, and I found them in a state of consternation; I endeavoured to rouse and support them. But I confess, that on returning to my own house, my mind stood in need of all its energy. My audience room was full of company; I took care not to show myself; at length, I was besieged even in my closet. In vain I gave orders to be denied to all but my intimate friends; the heads of the file forced their way to me. I fatigued myself to death in telling everybody that the news was exaggerated; that probably it was a stock-jobbing trick; that, besides, Bonaparte had always performed miracles on the field of battle. "But wait," said I, "do not act rashly, nor imprudently; let there be no envenomed speeches, nothing ostensible, nor hostile."

The next day an express arrived from the first consul, loaded with the laurels of victory; the disenchantment of one party could not stifle the universal intoxication. The battle of Marengo, like that of Actium, made our young Triumvir triumph, and raised him to the pinnacle of power, equally fortunate, but not so discreet as the Octavius of Rome. He had left us in the character of the first magistrate of a nation, still free, and he was about to reappear in the character of a conqueror. In fact, one might have said

that, at Marengo, he had less conquered Italy than France. From this period is to be dated the first step of that disgusting and servile flattery with which all the magistrates and public authorities conspired to turn his head during the fifteen years of his predominance. One of his councillors of state, named Rœderer, already made a divinity of his new master, and was seen to apply to him, in a public journal, the well-known verse of Virgil :

Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.

I foresaw all the fatal consequences that this adulatory tendency (so unworthy of a great people), would produce on France and on her chief. But the intoxication was at its height, and the triumph was complete. At length, in the night between the 2nd and 3rd of July, the conqueror arrived.

I observed, from the first moment, an appearance of moroseness and constraint on his countenance. That very evening, at the hour appointed to transact business, he darted a gloomy look at me, on entering his closet, and broke out in ejaculations :—"What ? so ! I was thought to be lost, and an experiment was about to be again made on a Committee of Public Safety. I know everything—and those were the men whom I saved and spared. Do they take me for Louis XVI. ? Let them try, and find the difference. Let them be undeceived ; a battle lost is for me a battle gained. I fear nothing ; I will crush all those ungrateful men and traitors into dust.—I am able to save France in spite of the factious and anarchical." I represented to him that there had only been a fit of the republican fever, excited by an inauspicious report, a report that I had contradicted, and the ill effects of which I had restrained; that my memorial to the two consuls, a copy of which I had transmitted to him, would enable him to appreciate, at its true value, that trifling movement of ferment and misgiving ; and that, in fine, the *dénouement* was so magnificent, and the

public satisfaction so general, that one might easily bear a few clouds, which only rendered the brilliancy of the picture more dazzling.—"But you do not tell me all," replied he; "was there not a design to place Carnot at the head of the government? Carnot, who suffered himself to be mystified on the 18th of Fructidor, who could not retain his authority for two months, and whom they would not fail to send to perish at Sinnamary." I affirmed that the conduct of Carnot had been unimpeachable; and I remarked that it would be very hard to render him responsible for the extravagant projects engendered by sickly brains, and of which he, Carnot, had not the least idea.

He was silent; but the impression had struck deep. He did not forgive Carnot, who, some time after, found himself under the necessity of resigning the portfolio of war. It is probable that I should have shared his anticipated disgrace, had not Cambacérès and Lebrun been witnesses of the circumspection of my conduct and the sincerity of my zeal.

Becoming more jealous as he became more powerful, the first consul armed himself with precautionary measures, and surrounded himself with a military train. His prejudices and distrusts were more especially directed against those whom he called the perverse, whether they wished to preserve the attachment to the popular party, or vented their sorrow in lamentations at the sight of dying liberty. I proposed mild measures in order to bring back the malcontents to the government; I asked to be authorized to gain the chiefs of the parties by pensions, gifts, and places; I received *carte blanche* with respect to the employment of pecuniary means; but my power did not extend to the distribution of public places or favours. I saw clearly that the first consul persisted in the system of allowing the republicans to form the minority only in his councils and high places; whilst he wished to maintain in full force the partisans of monarchy and absolute power. I had scarcely credit sufficient to obtain the nomination of some half-dozen prefects. Bona-

parte did not like the Tribunat, because it contained a nucleus of staunch republicans. It was well known that he more especially dreaded the zealots and enthusiasts, known by the name of anarchists, a set of men always ready to be the instruments of plots and revolutions. His distrusts and his alarms were excited by the persons who surrounded him, and who urged him towards monarchy; such as Portalis, Lebrun, Cambacérès, Clarke, Champagny, Fleurieu, Duchâtel, Jollivet, Benezech, Emmery, Rœderer, Cretet, Regnier, Chaptal, Dufresne, and many others. To this must be added the secret reports and clandestine correspondences of men employed by him, to watch the tendency and torrent of public opinion. In these, I was not spared; I was exposed to the most malevolent insinuations; my system of police was often run down and denounced. I had Lucien against me, who was then minister of the home department, and who had also his private police. Sometimes obliged to bear the reproaches of the first consul about facts which he believed concealed in obscurity, he suspected me of keeping spies upon him in order to depreciate him in my reports. I had positive orders to keep nothing concealed, whether popular reports or the gossip of the drawing-rooms. The result was, that Lucien making a bad use of his patronage and position, playing the part of a debauchee, seducing wives from their husbands, and trafficking in licenses for the exportation of corn, was often an object of public rumours. As the head of the police, I was bound in duty to point out how important it was that the members of the first consul's family should be irreproachable and pure in the eyes of the public.

The nature of the conflict in which I was thus engaged may be conceived; luckily, I had Josephine in my interest; Duroc was not against me; and the private secretary was devoted to my views. This personage, who was replete with ability and talent, but whose greediness of gain very shortly caused his disgrace, always exhibited so much

cupidity, that there is no occasion to name him in order to point him out. Having charge of the papers and secrets of his master, he discovered that I spent 100,000 francs (£4000) monthly, for the purpose of keeping a constant watch on the life of the first consul. The idea came into his head to make me pay for such intelligence as he might supply me, in order to furnish means of accomplishing the aim I had in view. He called on me, and offered to inform me exactly of all the proceedings of Bonaparte for 25,000 francs per month; and he made me this offer as a means of saving 900,000 francs per annum. I took care not to let this opportunity slip, of having the private secretary of the chief of the state in my pay; that chief whom it was so requisite for me to follow step by step, in order to know what he had done, and what he was about to do. The proposal of the secretary was accepted, and he every month very punctually received a blank order for 25,000 francs, the promised sum, which he was to draw out of the treasury. On my side, I had full reason to be satisfied with his dexterity and accuracy. But I took care, however, not to economize in the funds which I employed, in order to protect the person of Bonaparte from any unforeseen attack. The palace alone consumed more than half the 100,000 francs which were monthly allowed me for that purpose. But indeed I was by that means very accurately apprized of all that was important for me to know; and I was enabled, reciprocally, to verify and strengthen the informations of the secretary, by those I received from Josephine, and *vice versâ*. I was stronger than all my enemies put together. But what were the next measures resorted to, in order to destroy me? I was formally accused to the first consul of protecting republicans and demagogues; and the accusers went so far as to point out General Parain, who was personally attached to me, as being the intermediate agent whom I employed for the purpose of supplying information to the anarchists, and of distributing money among them.

The real fact is, that I employed all my ministerial influence in order to counteract the designs of zealots; to appease passions; to divert them from the means of combining any plot against the chief magistrate; and that many individuals were greatly indebted to me for salutary assistance and admonition. In doing this, I only availed myself of the latitude allowed me by my functions in the high police; I thought, and I still think, that it is better to prevent criminal attempts, than subsequently to exert the power of punishing them. But by dint of rendering me suspected, they at last excited the distrust of the first consul. In a short time, he imagined pretences to limit my functions, by especially charging the prefect of police with the duty of keeping a watch on the malcontents. That prefect was Dubois; an old lawyer, avaricious, and blindly devoted to power; a magistrate before the revolution, who, after having adroitly insinuated himself into the *bureau central*, got himself appointed prefect of police, after the 18th of Brumaire. In order to obtain a little private administration for himself, he threw difficulties in my way in the matter of the secret fund; and I was obliged to give him a good share on the large sums proceeding from gambling houses (*curée des Jeux*), under pretext that money was the sinew of all political police. But, afterwards, I succeeded in detecting him in the employment of the funds of his budget, which were levied from the base and disgraceful vices which dishonour the metropolis.

The Machiavelian maxim, *divide et impera*, having prevailed, there were shortly no less than four distinct systems of police: the military police of the palace, conducted by the aides-de-camp and by Duroc; the police of the inspectors of *gendarmerie;* the police of the prefecture, managed by Dubois; and my own. As to the police of the home department, I lost no time in abolishing it, as will shortly be seen. Accordingly, the consul daily received four different bulletins of police, derived from different quarters,

and which he could compare together; I do not mention the reports of his own trusty correspondents. This was what he called feeling the pulse of the republic; but it was considered as in a very bad state of health under his hands. Everything I could have done to support it would have turned to its disadvantage.

My adversaries laboured to reduce my functions to that of a simply administrative and theoretical police; but I was not the man to suffer it. The first consul himself,—I must do him this justice,—resisted firmly every attempt that was made with this view. He said, that, in thus wishing to deprive him of my services, he would be exposed to the hazard of remaining defenceless in presence of the counter-revolutionists; that no one understood better than I did how to manage the police of the English and Chouan agents, and that my system suited him. I felt, however, that I was no longer anything more than a counterpoise in the machine of government. Besides, its march was more or less subordinate to the course of public events and the chances of politics.

Everything, at that time, seemed to intimate an approaching peace. The battle of Marengo had, by the results of a military convention, more surprising than the victory itself, thrown into the power of the first consul, Piedmont, Lombardy, Genoa, and the strongest places in Upper Italy. He did not leave Milan until he had re-established the Cisalpine republic.

On his side, Moreau approaching Vienna, after having made himself master of Munich, the Austrians also were induced to solicit an armistice; that of Italy not extending to the German territory. To this Moreau consented; and on the 15th of July the preliminaries of peace were signed at Paris between Austria and France.

Successes so decisive, far from disarming the republican malcontents, exasperated them more and more. Bonaparte created bitter enemies by his absolute and military manner.

There were, at that time, in the ranks of the army a great number of oppositionists whom a republican spirit induced to form secret associations. General officers and colonels held their secret strings. They flattered themselves with having in their party Bernadotte, Augereau, Jourdan, Brune, and even Moreau himself, who already began to repent of having assisted the elevation of the individual, who had now erected himself into a master. It is true that no visible sign, no positive *datum*, had opened the eyes of the government on these intrigues; but some signs and random hints induced it to the frequent removal of the regiments and officers who had rendered themselves objects of suspicion.

In Paris, affairs were in a more serious condition, and the activity of the malcontents was more obvious. The more violent were withheld from employments, and watched. I was informed that, since the institution of the consular government, they held secret assemblies and fabricated plots. It was in rendering those plots abortive that I used all my exertions; by that means hoping to check the natural disposition of the government to re-act upon the individuals of the revolution. I had even succeeded in obtaining from the first consul some exterior demonstrations favourable to republican ideas. For example, on the anniversary of the 14th of July, which had just been celebrated under the auspices of concord, the first consul had given, at a solemn banquet, the following remarkable toast: "*The French people; our sovereign.*" I had spent large sums in sending succours to the indigent and unfortunate patriots; on the other hand, by the vigilance of my agents, and by means of timely information, I retained in obscurity and inactivity the most violent of those demagogues who, before the departure of Bonaparte for Italy, had assembled, and devised the project of perpetrating his murder on the road, in the vicinity of the capital. After his return, and his triumphs, resentments became blind and implacable. There were secret meetings held, and one of the more intemperate conspirators, concealed under the

uniform of a *gendarme*, took an oath to assassinate Bonaparte at the *Comédie Française*. My measures, combined with those of General Lannes, chief of the counter-police, caused the frustration of this plot. But one baffled conspiracy was quickly followed by another. How, indeed, could the possibility be expected of restraining, for any length of time, men of a turbulent character and of an unconquerable fanaticism, living, moreover, in a state of distress so well calculated to inflame? It is with such instruments that conspiracies are formed and fomented. I soon received information that Juvenot, an old aide-de-camp of Henriot, with some twenty zealots, were plotting the attack and murder of the first consul at Malmaison. I put a stop to this, and caused Juvenot to be arrested. But it was impossible to extract any confession; we were unable to penetrate the secret of these intrigues, and to reach their real authors. Fion, Dufour, and Rossignol, passed for the principal agents of the conspiracy; Talot and Laignelot for its invisible directors. They had their own pamphleteer; this was Metge, a resolute, active man, but whom no one could find.

Towards the middle of September, intimation was given me of a plot to assassinate the first consul at the opera. I caused Rossignol and some other obscure persons who were suspected, to be arrested and conveyed to prison in the Temple. The interrogatory eliciting no light, I ordered them to be set at liberty, with directions to watch them. A fortnight after, the same conspiracy was resumed; at least, an individual named Harel, one of the accomplices, in the hope of large remuneration, made some disclosures, in concert with the war commissary Lefebvre, to Bourienne, secretary of the first consul. Harel himself being brought forward, corroborated his first information, and designated the conspirators. According to him they were Cerrachi and Diana, Roman refugees; Arena, brother of the Corsican deputy who had declared against the first consul; the painter Topino-Lebrun, a fanatical patriot; and Demerville, an old

clerk to the committee of public safety, an intimate acquaintance of Barrère. This affair brought upon me, at the palace, a tolerably vehement attack of reproaches and bitterness. Luckily I was not thrown off my guard. "General Consul," I calmly replied, "if the indiscreet zeal of the accuser had been less interested, he would have come to me, who direct, and ought to direct, all the secret strings of the superior police, and who secure the safety of the chief magistrate against all organized conspiracy—organized, I say—for there is no one can answer for preventing the effects of the individual rage of a fanatical ruffian. In this case, beyond a doubt, there is a plot; or, at least, a real design to commit violence. I was myself acquainted with it, and had put a watch on the rash projectors, who seemed to indulge the hope of the possibility of its execution. I can produce proofs of what I advance, by producing immediately the person from whom I derived my information!" It was Barrère who was then charged with the political articles inserted in the papers under ministerial influence. "Very well," replied Bonaparte in an animated tone; "let him be produced and make his declaration to General Lannes, who is already acquainted with the affair, and with whom you will concert the proper measures."

I soon perceived that the policy of the first consul led him to impart substance to a shadow; and that it was his wish to have it believed that he had incurred great danger. It was decided (and to this I was a stranger) that the conspirators should be entrapped into a snare which Harel was ordered to devise; in procuring them, as he had promised, four armed men ready for the assassination of the first consul, on the evening of the 10th of October, while present at the performance of the opera of the Horatii.

This being arranged, the consul, in a privy council, to which the minister of war was not summoned, spoke of the dangers by which he was surrounded, the plots of the anarchists and demagogues, and of the perverse direction which

men of irritable and ferocious republicanism imparted to the public mind. He named Carnot, and reproached him with his connection with men of the revolution, and with his morose disposition. Lucien spoke in the same strain, but in a more artificial manner ; and he referred (the whole scene being got up for the occasion) to the prudence and wisdom of the consuls Cambacérès and Lebrun, who, pleading reasons of state, said that the portfolio of the war department must be withdrawn from Carnot. The fact is, that Carnot had frequently allowed himself to defend public liberty, and remonstrate with the first consul against the favours granted to royalists ; against the royal magnificence of the court ; and against the inclination which Josephine manifested of performing the part of queen, and surrounding herself with females whose name and rank flattered her vanity. The next day, Carnot, in conformity with the notice which I was instructed to give him, sent in his resignation.

On the day following, at the performance of the Horatii, the mock-attempt on the life of the first consul was made. There, persons stationed in readiness by the counter-police, and with respect to whom the conspirators had been deluded, arrested Diana, Cerrachi, and their accomplices.

This affair made a great noise ; and it was what was wanted. All the superior authorities hurried to congratulate the first consul on the danger he had escaped. In his reply from the Tribunat, he said that he had in reality run no danger ; that independently of the assistance given by all good citizens, who were present at the performance which he attended, he had with him a picquet of his brave guard. "The wretches," exclaimed he, "could not have borne their looks !" . . . .

I immediately proposed measures of superintendence and precaution for the future ; and among others, to disarm all the villages on the road from Paris to Malmaison, and to institute a search into all the detached houses on the same road. Special instructions were drawn up in order to im-

part redoubled vigilance to the agents of police. The counter-police of the palace also took extraordinary measures; less facility of access to the chief magistrate was permitted; all the avenues by which he reached the boxes of the theatres were secured from all risk of individual violence.

Every new government generally takes advantage of a danger which it has escaped, either to strengthen or to extend its power; to have escaped a conspiracy is sufficient ground for acquiring more energy and vigour. The first consul was instinctively induced to follow this policy, adopted by all his predecessors. In this latter case, he was more particularly prompted to it by his brother Lucien, who was equally ambitious as himself, although his ambition exhibited a different shape and character. It had not escaped his notice, that he displeased and annoyed his brother, either by speaking with too much pride and pleasure of the 18th of Brumaire, or by attempting to exercise too great a predominance in the operations of government. He had, at first, entertained a secret design of urging Bonaparte to establish a species of consular *duumvirate*, by means of which he meant to have retained in his own hands all the civil power, and to have thus effected a participation of power with a brother who never contemplated the idea of any participation whatsoever.

This project having failed, he sought every means of re-establishing his credit, which had declined in consequence of his wants, and of that iron barrier which he found in his way, and to the construction of which he had himself so much contributed.

Availing himself of the impression produced by the species of a republican conspiracy just suppressed, and exaggerating, to the eye of his brother, the inconvenience attending on the instability of his power, and the dangers to which he would be exposed through the republican spirit, he hoped from that time to induce him to establish a con-

stitutional monarchy, of which he meant himself to be the directing minister and support. I was openly opposed to this project, which was at that time impracticable ; and I was well aware that the first consul himself, however devoured by the desire of rendering his power immovable, founded the anticipated success of his encroachments upon other combinations.

Lucien, however, persisted in his projects ; and wishing to complete the work, which, according to him, was only yet a sketch, at least thinking he might be certain of the tacit assent of his brother, he caused a pamphlet to be secretly composed and written, entitled, *Parallel of Cromwell, Monk, and Bonaparte*, where the cause and principles of monarchy were overtly advocated and cried up. Great numbers of this pamphlet having being struck off, Lucien, in his private office, ordered so many packets as there were prefectures to be made, and each packet contained copies equal in number to the functionaries of the departments. No official notice, it is true, accompanied this mission which was sent to each prefect by coach ; but the nature of the thing, the superscription bearing the seal of a minister, and other indications, gave sufficient intimation of the source and political object of the publication. I, on the same day, received a copy, unknown to Lucien ; and hastening to Malmaison, I laid it under the eye of the first consul, with a report, in which I pointed out the serious inconveniences likely to result from so ill disguised an initiative. I designated it as unseasonable and imprudent ; and I supported my arguments effectually by referring to the state of secret irritation in which the mind of the army at that time was, especially among the generals and superior officers, who personally were little attached to Bonaparte, and who, being indebted for their military fortunes to the revolution, were attached more than it was imagined to republican forms and principles: I said that a monarchical establishment could not without danger be abruptly made to succeed

them, and that it would be obnoxious to all those, who beforehand raised the cry of usurpation ; I concluded, in short, by making the premature character of such tests obvious, and I subsequently obtained an order, publicly to prevent the further propagation of the pamphlet.

I afterwards ordered the circulation to be stopped, and in order with more effect to obviate the suspicion that it emanated from government, I designated it in my circular as the work of *some contemptible and culpable intrigue*. Lucien, in a rage at this, and concluding that I should not have employed such expressions without being authorized, hurried in his turn to Malmaison, in order to extort an explanation, which was of a stormy character. From this epoch the opposition between the two brothers assumed a complexion of hostility, which concluded by degenerating into violent scenes. It is certain that Lucien, at the conclusion of a warm dispute, passionately threw on his brother's desk his portfolio of minister, exclaiming that he divested himself the more readily of a public character, as he had suffered nothing but torment, from subjection to such a despot ; and that, on the other hand, his brother, equally exasperated, called his aides-de-camp on duty to turn out of his closet the *citizen* who forgot the respect due to the first consul.

Decorum and state reasons united, required the separation of the two brothers, without more scandal and violence. M. de Talleyrand and myself undertook this task ; all was politically made up. Lucien in a short time set off for Madrid, with the title of ambassador, and with an express mission to try to change the resolutions of the King of Spain, and urge him to a war against Portugal ; a kingdom which the first consul beheld, with chagrin, subjected to dependence upon England.

The causes and the circumstances of the departure of Lucien could scarcely remain secret. On this occasion, the opportunity was not lost, in private correspondences and in

the Parisian drawing-rooms, to exhibit me upon the stage; to represent me, as having triumphed in a contest for favour against the brother of the first consul himself; it was pretended, that by such means I had enabled the party of Josephine and the Beauharnais to preponderate over the party of the brothers of Napoleon. It is true, that, considering the advantages of the unity of authority, I was fully persuaded that the mild and benignant influence of the Beauharnais was preferable to the excessive and imperious encroachments of a Lucien, who wished to govern the state, and to leave his brother nothing but the management of the army.

New plots, engendered by totally opposite parties, succeeded these domestic quarrels of the palace. Ever since the latter end of October, the fanatics had renewed their sinister designs; I perceived that they were organized with a secrecy and ability which disconcerted all the vigilance of the police. At this period, two parallel and almost identical plots were formed against the life of the first consul, by demagogues and royalists. As the latter, which was more dangerous because entirely devised in darkness, appeared to me to be connected with the political situation in which the chief magistrate was then placed, I will give a summary of that situation in a few words.

The Emperor of Austria had received news of the preliminaries of peace being signed in his name at Paris, by the Count St. Julien, at the very moment when that monarch had signed a subsidiary treaty with England. The cabinet of Vienna, thus placed between peace and the gold of England, courageously resolved on running again the chances of war. M. de St. Julien was thrown into a state prison for having exceeded his powers; and the armistice being about to expire very shortly, preparations for renewing hostilities were made on both sides. The armistice, however, was extended till November. Thus, on both sides, they balanced between peace and war. The first consul

and his government were at that time inclined to peace, which then solely depended on the operations of Moreau in Germany; of that Moreau, whose reputation Bonaparte even at that time envied.

He was the only man whose renown could bear competition with his, in point of strategic skill. This kind of military rivalry, and the position of Moreau, in regard to public opinion, subjected Bonaparte, in some sort, to the mercy of his success, while in the interior of France he was exposed to the plots of demagogues and hostile royalists. In their eyes, he was the common enemy. The vigilance of the police, far from discouraging the anarchists, seemed to inspire them with more audacity and vigour. Their leaders sometimes assembled at the house of Chrétien, the *limonadier;* sometimes at Versailles; sometimes in the garden of the Capucines, organizing insurrection, and already devising a provisional government. Wishing to bring the matter to a conclusion, they proceeded to desperate resolutions. One of them, named Chevalier, a man of delirious republicanism and atrocious mind, who had been employed in the great park of artillery at Meudon, under the committee of public safety, to devise means of destruction calculated on the extraordinary effects of gunpowder, conceived the first idea of destroying Bonaparte by means of an infernal machine, which should be placed on his way. Stimulated by the approbation of his accomplices, and still more by his natural disposition, Chevalier, seconded by a man named Veycer, constructed a kind of barrel, hooped with iron, furnished with nails, and loaded with gunpowder and case-shot, to which he affixed a lock ready cocked, and which could be fired at pleasure, by means of a line, which would enable the person who fired it to shelter himself from the explosion. The work proceeded rapidly; and the conspirators were very impatient to blow up, by means of the infernal machine, the *little corporal*, a name which they gave to Bonaparte. This was not all; the most daring

among them, with Chevalier at their head, had the audacity to make an experiment of the infernal machine among themselves. The night between the 17th and 18th of October was chosen ; the chiefs of the plot proceeded to the back part of the convent *de la Salpêtrière*, believing themselves in that place secure from detection. The explosion was so great, that the fanatics themselves, seized with terror, dispersed. As soon as they recovered from their first alarm, they deliberated on the effects of the horrible invention ; some considered it well adapted to effect their purpose ; others (and Chevalier was of this opinion) thought that as it was not the object of their plot to destroy many persons, but to secure the destruction of one, the effect of the infernal machine depended on too many hazardous chances. After some deep reflection, Chevalier decided on the idea of constructing a kind of incendiary bomb, which being thrown into the first consul's carriage, either at his arrival or departure from the play, would blow it up by a sudden and inevitable explosion. Accordingly, he again set himself to work.

But the nocturnal explosion had already attracted my attention ; and the exulting of the conspirators transpiring from one to the other, very shortly drew the whole police after their heels. The greater part of the secret intelligence alluded to an infernal machine, which was intended to blow up the *little corporal*. I consulted my memorandum book, and I felt assured that Chevalier must be the principal artificer of this perfidious machination. He was found concealed on the 8th of November, and arrested, as well as Veycer, in the *Rue des Blancs Manteaux ;* all those who were suspected to be their accomplices being taken at the same time. Powder and bullets were found ; the relics of the first machine, and a rough model of the incendiary bomb ; in short, everything that could serve to substantiate the crime. But no confession was to be obtained either by menaces or bribes.

It was natural to believe, after this discovery, that the life

of Bonaparte would be secure against means so atrocious and attempts so heinous. But the other hostile party, following the same object through similar plots, already hoped to rob the demagogues of the invention of the infernal machine. Nothing is more extraordinary, and nevertheless more true, than this sudden change of actors on the same stage, in order to perform the same tragedy. All this would appear incredible, did I not myself retrace its secret causes, as they successively recur in my own mind.

At the opening of the campaign, Georges Cadoudal, the most determined and inveterate of all the chiefs of Lower Brittany, who had not been yet subdued, landed at Morbihan, on a mission from London, to prepare a new attack. He was invested with the command-in-chief of all Brittany, the military details of which command he deputed to his principal lieutenants, Mercier la Vendée, de Bar, Sol de Grisolles, and Guillemot. These intrigues were connected with others carried on in Paris, among correspondents and fellow-conspirators, and in the departments of the west. In this case, I had more than indications: I had a full knowledge of a projected insurrection, which, at that epoch (the passage of St. Bernard by the first consul), gave great cause of alarm to the two other consuls, Cambacérès and Lebrun. I immediately adopted vigorous measures. My agents and the whole of the *gendarmerie* took the field; I caused several of the old suspected chiefs to be watched and arrested, and among others, some very dangerous heads of parishes. But the operations of the police were more or less subordinate to the chances of foreign war.

In a report which I addressed to the first consul at Milan, I did not disguise from him the symptoms of a crisis which displayed themselves in the interior of France; and I told him that he must absolutely return victorious, and without any delay, in order to disperse the newly-collected elements of troubles and storms.

In fact, as has been seen, fortune on the field of Marengo

loaded him with all kinds of favours, and at the very moment when his enemies considered him lost for ever. This sudden triumph disconcerted all the designs of England, and destroyed all the hopes of Georges Cadoudal, without, however, subduing his determined mind. He persevered in remaining in Morbihan, which he considered as his domain, and the royalist organization of which was supported by his exertions. Informed by his correspondents, at Paris, of the irritation and reviving plots of the popular party, he sent thither, towards the end of October, his most determined confidential officers, such as Limolan, Saint-Régent, Joyaux, and Haie-Saint-Hilaire. It is even probable that he had already conceived, or adopted, the idea of borrowing the infernal machine from the jacobins, of which machine his agents had given him information. In the disposition in which the public mind and the government were, this crime, being perpetrated by royalists, could not fail being ascribed to the jacobins; hence the royalists would reap alone the fruits of it. A combination so audacious appeared essentially political. Such was the origin of the attempt made on the 24th of December (3rd Nivôse), by the agents, or, rather, the delegates of Georges. This double plot remained for a short time concealed by a thick veil, so exclusively did the suspicions and attention of all parties direct themselves toward the anarchists. One circumstance appeared favourable to confer a great probability of success on this new design. The oratorio of the Creation of the World, by Haydn, was announced for the 24th of December, at the opera; all Paris was aware that the first consul would be present with his court. So profound was the perversity of the conspiracy, that the agents of Georges deliberated whether it would not be more certain to place the infernal machine beneath the very foundations of the opera-house, so as to blow up at the same time Bonaparte and the whole *élite* of his government. Whether it was the idea of so horrible a catastrophe, or the uncertainty of destroying the individual

against whom such an outrage was designed, which caused the crime to be put off, I am incapable, indeed, I tremble to pronounce. Nevertheless, an old naval officer, named Saint-Régent, assisted by Carbon, called Little Francis, a subaltern, was directed to place the fatal machine in the Rue Saint-Nicaise, which it was necessary for Bonaparte to pass, and to apply the match in time to blow up his carriage. The burning of the match, the effect of the powder and explosion, was all computed by the time which the coachman of the first consul ordinarily employed, in coming from the Tuileries to the post in the Rue Saint-Nicaise, near which the infernal machine was to be placed.

The prefect of police and myself were apprized the evening before, that there was much whispering in certain clubs, of a great blow that was to be struck on the following day. This information was very vague; besides, notices equally alarming were brought to us every day. The first consul, however, was instantly apprized of it, by our diurnal reports. He at first appeared to exhibit some hesitation; but, on the report of the counter-police of the palace, that the opera-house had been inspected, and all kinds of precautionary measures taken, he ordered his carriage and departed, accompanied by his aides-de-camp. On this occasion, as on so many others, it was Cæsar accompanied by his fortune. It is well known that the hope of the conspirators was only baffled by a slight accident. The first consul's coachman, being half intoxicated on that day, having driven his horses with more than usual celerity, the explosion, which was computed with rigorous precision, took place two seconds too late; and that scarcely perceptible fraction of time, deducted from the preconcerted interval, sufficed to save the life of the first consul, and consolidate his power.[1]

[1] The infernal machine did not accomplish its design, which was that of destroying the first consul; but it caused the death of some twenty persons, and wounded fifty-six others, more or less severely. Succours were given to the unfortunate wounded, according to the greater or less severity of their wounds. The *maximum* of these succours was four

Without expressing any astonishment at the event, Bonaparte exclaimed on hearing the report of the frightful explosion, "That is the infernal machine!" and unwilling to retrograde or fly, he made his appearance at the opera. But with what a wrathful countenance and terrible aspect! What gloomy thoughts must have rushed on his suspicious mind! The news of the attempt soon circulated from box to box; the public indignation was warm, and the sensation profound among the ministers, the courtiers, and those who approached the first consul; in short, among all individuals attached to the car of his fortune. Not waiting for the end

thousand five hundred francs, and the *minimum* twenty-five francs. The orphans and widows received pensions, as well as the children of those who perished; but only till they arrived at their majority; and then they were to receive two thousand francs for their fitting out. The following are the names of the persons who received assistance by order of the first consul, with the amount of the sum allowed them:—

Bataille, Mme., épicière, rue St. Nicaise	100
Boiteux, Jean-Marie-Joseph, ci-devant frère de la Charité	50
Bonnet, Mme., rue St. Nicaise	150
Boulard, (veuve,) musicienne, rue J. J. Rousseau	4000
A second supply was granted her on account of her wounds: it was	3000
Bourdin, Françoise Louvrier, femme, portiere, rue St. Nicaise	50
Buchener, Louis, tailleur, rue St. Nicaise	25
Chapuy, Gilbert, officier civil de la marine, rue de Bac	800
Charles, Jean Etienne, imprimeur, rue St. Nicaise	400
Clement, garçon maréchal, rue de Petit Carrousel	50
Cléreaux, Marie Joséphine Lehodey, épicière, rue Neuve de l'Egalité	3800
Collinet, Marie Jeanne Cécile, revendeuse, à la halle	200
Corbet, Nicolas Alexandre, employé à l'état-major de la 17e division, rue St. Honoré	240
Couteux, vermicellier, rue des Prouvaires	150
Duverne, Louis, ouvrier serrurier, rue du Harlay	1000
Fleury, Catherine Lenoir, veuve, rue de Malte	50
Fostier, Louis Philippe, remplaçant au poste de la rue St. Nicaise	25
Fridzery, Alexandrie Marie Antoine, musicien aveugle, rue St. Nicaise	750
Gauther, Marie Poncette, fille, rue de Chaillo	100
Harel, Antoine, garçon limonadier, rue de Malte	3000
Hiblot, Marie Anne, fille, rue de Malte	240
Honoré, Marie Thérèse Larue, veuve, rue Marceau	100
Honoré, Thérèse, fill, ouvrière	50
Huguet, Louis, cuisinier aux Champs Elysées	50
Jardy, Julien, remplaçant au poste St. Nicaise	100
Kalbert, Jean Antoine, apprentif menuisier, rue	100

of the opera, all followed his carriage: and, on his return to the Tuileries, there opened a scene, or rather an orgy of blind and furious passions. On my arrival, for I hurried there without delay, I judged from the agitation of the minds, from the frozen glance which his adherents and councillors darted at me, that a storm was about to burst upon my head, and that the most unjust suspicions were directed against the police. For this result I was prepared, and determined not to suffer myself to be put down by the clamours of the courtiers nor the apostrophes of the first consul. "Well!" exclaimed he, advancing towards me with a countenance inflamed with rage; "Well! you will

Lambert, Marie Jacqueline Gillot, femme, rue Fromenteau	100
Leclerc, élève en peinture, mort à l'hospice	200
Lefevre, Simon François, garçon tapissier, rue de la Verreri	200
Leger, Madame, limonadière, rue St. Nicaise	1500
Lepape, Elizabeth Satabin, femme, portière, rue St. Nicaise	100
Lemierre, Nicolas, rue de Malte, tenant maison garnie	200
Lion, Pierre Nicolas, domestique, allée d'Antin	600
Masse, Jean François, garçon marchand de vin, rue des St. Pères	150
Mercier, Jean Baptiste, rentier, rue St. Honoré	4500
Orilliard, Stéphanie Madeleine, fille, couturière, rue de Lille	900
Palluel, portier, rue St. Nicaise	50
Préville, Claude Barthélemi, tapissier, rue des Saints-Pères	4500
Proverbi, Antoine, homme de confiance, rue des Filles St. Thomas	750
Regnault, femme, ouvrière, rue de Grenelle St. Honoré	200
St. Gilles, Louis, femme, ouvrière en linge, galerie des Innocens	400
Selleque, veuve, rue Saint Denis	200
Thirion, Jean, cordonnier en vieux, rue St. Nicaise	25
Trepsat, architecte, rue de Bourgogne	4500
Varlet, rue Saint Louis, remplaçant au poste St. Nicaise	25
Warmé, N. marchand de vin, rue St. Nicaise	100
Vitriée, Elizabeth, femme, cuisinière, rue St. Nicaise	100
Vitry, perruquier, rue St. Nicaise	50
Wolff, Arnoult, tailleur, rue de Malte	150
Zambrini, Félix, garçon limonadier chez Corazza	600
Banny, Jean Frederic, garçon traiteur, rue des Grands Augustins	1000
Barbier, Marie, Geneviève Viel, veuve, rue St. Honoré	1000
Beirlé, Alexandre, marchand gantier peaussier, rue St. Nicaise	800
Boyeldieu, Marie Louis Chevalier, veuve, rue St. Placide	1000
Orphelins, Lister, Agnès, Adélaide	1200
Mitaine, Jeanne Prevost, veuve, rue de Malta	450
Platel, Jeanne Smith, veuve	1030

The sum total was 77,601 fr.; the overplus was paid in to the fund at the *Mont de Piété*, in order to pay the pensions.—*Note by the Editor.*

not now pretend to say that these were royalists!"—"Yes," I replied, as if inspired, and with perfect presence of mind, "beyond a doubt I will say so; and what is more, I will prove it."

My reply, at first, caused a universal astonishment; but the first consul, repeating with more and more bitterness, and with obstinate incredulity, that the horrible attempt just directed against his life was the work of a party too much protected and not sufficiently restrained by the police; in short, of the jacobins—"No;" I replied, "it is the work of the royalists, of the Chouans; and I only require a week to furnish the proofs of it." Having thus obtained some attention, I gave a summary of recent notices and facts, and justified the whole police; adverting, at the same time, to its subdivision into different centres, in order to exonerate myself from all personal responsibility. I even went further;—I recriminated against that tendency of the public mind, which, within the atmosphere of the government, was urged to impute everything that was culpable to the jacobins and the men of the revolution. I attributed to this false bias the circumstance of the whole vigilance of the counter-police being directed against individuals, who were, doubtless, dangerous, but who were now paralyzed and disarmed; while the emigrants, the Chouans, the agents of England, would not have been able, if any timely warning had been attended to, to strike the metropolis with terror, and fill the public mind with indignation. I brought to my opinion General Lannes, Réal, Regnault, and Josephine; and strong on the respite of eight days granted me, I felt no doubt that proof sufficient would instantly be supplied in support of my conjectures. I had soon, in fact, possession, by means of the single bait of 2000 louis, of all the designs of the agents of Georges, and I was furnished with the secret of their hearts. I was apprized, that the day of the explosion and the day following, eighty chiefs of the Chouans had clandestinely arrived at Paris, from different quarters, and through

by-ways; that if all of these were not in the secret of the meditated crime, they, at least, were all in expectation of some great event, and were all supplied with a pass-word. At length, the true author and instrument of the attempt were revealed to me, and the proofs accumulating in a few days, I concluded by triumphing over the incredulity and prejudices of my enemies.

I had not failed to perceive, that this last attempt made on the life of the first consul had irritated his gloomy and haughty spirit; and that in the resolution to suppress his enemies, he looked to such an increase of power as would render him the master. His inclination was but too well seconded through all the hierarchies of government.

His first essay, as military dictator, was to pass an act of deportation beyond the seas against such individuals among the demagogues and anarchists in worst repute at Paris; and of whom I was desired to draw up a list. The senate, impelled by the public feeling, and conceding all that was required, made no hesitation in conferring its sanction on this extra-judicial act. I succeeded, but not without difficulty, in saving some forty of the proscribed, whom I caused to be struck out of the list before the publication of the Senatus Consultum, authorizing deportation into Africa. Through my means, that cruel decree of deportation pronounced against Charles de Hesse, Felix Lepelletier, Choudieu, Talot, Destrem, and other persons suspected of being the ringleaders of plots which gave inquietude to Bonaparte, was changed to a simple measure of exile, and *surveillance* beyond the limits of Paris. Measures were not limited to the banishment of the most violent jacobins. The first consul found the forms of the constitutional tribunals too dilatory; he wanted an active and inexorable justice; he wished to abstract the accused from the sphere of their natural judges. It was deliberated in the council of state, that the establishment of special tribunals, without jury,

appeal, or revision, should be solicited, as a law of exception, from the legislative body.

I endeavoured to prove that it was at least necessary to abstract from the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals none but persons accused of conspiracies, or individuals who had attacked and robbed the stages on the high-roads. I represented that the roads were infested by brigands; accordingly, a decree was published by the consuls on the 7th of January, ordaining that no diligence should depart from Paris without having four soldiers commanded by a serjeant or corporal on the roof, and without having a night-escort. The diligences were still attacked; such was the system of petty warfare carried on by the Chouans. At the same epoch, some scoundrels, known under the name of *chauffeurs*, desolated the provinces. Strong measures were necessary; for the government felt more alarmed than was apparent. Persons accused of conspiracy were punished without mercy.

Two military commissions were nominated; one sentenced Chevalier and Veycer, the persons accused of having fabricated the infernal machine, and caused them to be executed; the other pronounced the same penalty against Metge, Humbert, and Chapelle, charged with having conspired against the government. They were executed, like Chevalier and Veycer, on the plain de Grenelle. At the same time, Arena, Cerrachi, Demerville, and Topino-Lebrun, appeared before the criminal tribunal, where they were allowed the benefit of a trial by jury; but the period was inauspicious, and the public prejudice decisive. They were condemned to die, and their four accomplices acquitted. No tribunal before, on the attempt of the life of the first consul, would have dared to condemn them on the single testimony of Harel, a hireling accuser.

The trial relative to the explosion of the 3rd Nivôse came on later. I had at heart to gather every possible evidence, as I had promised, and I succeeded. There was no longer any doubt of the quarter from whence the crime originated.

It was proved that Carbon had bought the horse and cart in which the infernal machine had been placed; it was equally proved that he and Saint-Régent had kept the cart under a shed; had provided the casks; brought baskets and boxes filled with small shot; and, in short, that Saint-Régent, having fired off the machine, had been wounded by the effect of the explosion.

The analogy remarked between these different attempts, caused a presumption that some understanding had existed between their authors, although of different parties. The only analogy, in reality, was the common hatred which induced both to conspire against the same obstacle; nor were there any other intercourse between them than those of secret watching, by which the royalists had become acquainted with the terrible instrument with which the jacobins intended to destroy Bonaparte.

Blood enough was doubtless shed, in order to strike terror into the hearts of his enemies; and from that moment his power might be considered as established. He had in his favour all those who surrounded him. Fortune, moreover, which seemed ever watchful for his advantage, loaded him with the consummation of her favours in the great game of war. His armies in Germany, commanded by Moreau, had resumed the offensive at the expiration of the armistice, and Moreau, following up his successes, had just gained the battle of Hohenlinden; on that occasion, and on the theatre of his glory, he exclaimed, in addressing his generals—"My friends, we have conquered peace." In fact, in less than twenty days he had rendered himself master of eighty leagues of vigorously-disputed territory; had forced the formidable lines of the Inn, the Salza, the Traun, and the Ens; had pushed on his advanced-posts to within twenty leagues of Vienna; had dispersed the only troops which covered his approaches; and, stopped in his career by policy, or envy, he concluded a fresh armistice at Steyer. Convinced of the emergency of circumstances, the cabinet of London consented to Austria's

desisting from the conditions of the alliance, and opening negotiations for a separate peace; which gave occasion for the remark, that Bonaparte had triumphed for his own interest; Moreau, for the peace of his country. Such were the first seeds of that rivalry which were sown between these two great captains. Difference of character, and the remains of the republican spirit, could not fail to produce between them, at a later period, an open rupture.

This spirit showed itself in the capital, and caused a sort of agitation, on account of a project of law tending to establish a special criminal tribunal wherever it might be deemed necessary. The truth is, that the thing proposed was a sort of nondescript commission, composed one-half of civil and the other of military judges. This project having been laid before the *tribunat*, startled those of the tribunes who cherished liberty; in their minds they identified this new measure with the *justice prévôtale* of the old times.[1]

The government orators alleged that the social fabric was attacked at its foundation by an organization of crime more powerful and more extensive than the laws. "The laws," said they, "have no longer any relation with that scum of society which rejects all justice, and which contends to the utmost extreme against the whole social system." The discussion was skilful and animated; it occupied seven sittings; Isnard, Benjamin Constant, Daunou, Chénier, Ginguené, and Bailleul, advanced as the rear-guard of the republic, and disputed with vigour, but with moderation and decency, the proposal of the government. It only passed by a small majority, and by means of the influence of the cabinet. The project concluded with the grant of a power to the consuls, of banishing from the city, where the principal

[1] The prevôts were a sort of military magistrates who took cognizance of some capital crimes and offences, such as murder, highway robbery, false coining, &c.; they had armed men under them, whose office it was to protect the high roads, and to arrest offenders. The sentences of the prevôtal court were without appeal.—*English Editor.*

authorities resided, and even from every other town, such persons whose presence attracted suspicion. This grant established, as it were, the dictatorship of the police ; and people did not fail to say that I was about to become the Sejanus of a new Tiberius. Everything which the first consul required was conceded.

Invested with legal dictatorship ; armed with power to punish his enemies with death or banishment, the first consul soon gave reason to fear that his government would very soon have no other *primum mobile* than force. But he gave peace to the world—and peace was a talisman which, while offering a tranquil haven after so many storms, dissipated a multitude of clouds.

The congress of Lunéville, at the end of forty days, produced a definite treaty of peace, which was signed on the 9th of February, 1801, between France and Austria.

The possession of the left bank of the Rhine, from the point where it quits the Helvetic territory to that where it enters the Batavian, was confirmed to France. Austria reserved in Italy her ancient Venetian jurisdiction; the river Adige was its boundary. The independence of the Batavian, Helvetian, Cisalpine, and Ligurian republics, was mutually guaranteed.

The first consul had taken so much umbrage at the opposition manifested by the Tribunat against the march of his government, that, in order to signify his displeasure, he made no reply, on the occasion of the peace of Lunéville, to the orator of that body.

Other points required regulation in Italy, whence Massena had been recalled on suspicion of republicanism. Since the preceding month of August, he had been superseded by Brune, who himself had been suspected when at the camp du depôt, at Dijon, and whom I had succeeded in getting restored to favour by attenuating certain secret disclosures ; for there were spies upon every staff.

But however that may be, Brune had made himself master

of Tuscany, and confiscated Leghorn, and every kind of English property.

At the solicitation of the Emperor Paul, and in deference to his mediation, Bonaparte, who, from that time, had designed the conquest of the two Sicilies, stopped the march of Murat upon Naples, and negotiated with the Holy See.

The treaty of peace with Naples soon followed ; by virtue of which, until the establishment of a definitive peace between France, Great Britain, and the Ottoman Porte, four thousand French soldiers occupied the northern Abruzzo, and twelve thousand the Peninsula of Otranto. It was I who first suggested the idea of this in a privy council. The stipulations were to remain secret. By this occupation of Abruzzo, Tarentum and the fortresses, France supported, at the expense of the kingdom of Naples, a military corps, which, as occasion required, might either pass into Egypt, Dalmatia, or Greece.

The treaty of Lunéville had stipulated for Austria and the Germanic Empire ; it was ratified by the diet ; and in this manner peace was established on the European continent. Throughout this affair, the first consul appeared extremely pleased with the dexterity of his minister of state for foreign affairs, Talleyrand-Périgord. But at bottom he began to be annoyed by the gazetteers of London, who constantly represented him as being under the diplomatic tutelage of M. de Talleyrand, and in point of government, under mine ; and as being incapable of moving a single step without us, whose abilities were purposely exaggerated, in order to render us obnoxious and suspected. I tired him myself with repeating incessantly that, when governments are not just, their prosperity is only transitory ; that in the elevated sphere where fortune had placed him he ought to quench the hateful passions engendered by a long revolution in the torrents of his renown ; and thus recall the nation to generous and benevolent habits, which are the only real source of public prosperity and happiness.

But how, on emerging from a long-protracted hurricane, could any one expect to find at the head of an immense republic, transformed into a military dictatorship, a chief at once just, energetic, and moderate? The heart of Bonaparte was not alien from vengeance and hatred, nor was his mind shut against prejudice; and it was easy to perceive, through the veil, in which he concealed himself, a decided inclination to tyranny. It was precisely that inclination that I exerted myself to soften and combat; but for that purpose I never employed any other weapons than the ascendency of truth and reason. I was sincerely attached to that man, being fully convinced that there was no one in the career of arms and in the civil order who possessed a character so firm, so persevering; such a character, in short, as was requisite to direct the government and suppress factions. I even flattered myself at that time that I could subdue whatever might be too violent or too harsh in his great character. Others calculated on a passion for women; for Bonaparte was by no means insensible to their charms; at all events, it was obvious that the fair sex would never obtain an influence over him prejudicial to public affairs. The first trial of this sort was not successful. Having been struck, on his last passage through Milan, with the theatrical beauty of the singer G——, and still more by the sublime accents of her voice, he made her some rich presents, and wished to attach her to him. He commissioned Berthier to conclude a treaty with her on liberal terms, and to bring her to Paris; she even performed the journey in Berthier's carriage. Having a tolerable income of fifteen thousand francs a month, she exhibited her brilliant talents at the theatre and the concerts at the Tuileries, where her voice delighted every one. But at that time the chief magistrate made a point of avoiding scandal; and not wishing to give Josephine, who was excessively jealous, any subject of complaint, his visits to the beautiful vocalist were abrupt and clandestine. Amours without attentions and without

were not likely to satisfy a proud and impassioned woman, who had something masculine in her character. G—— had recourse to the usual infallible antidote; she fell violently in love with the celebrated violin player, Rode. Equally smitten himself, he could not observe any precautions; equally defying the vigilance of Junot and Berthier. While these intrigues were going on, Bonaparte one day told me that he was astonished, that with my acknowledged talents, I did not govern the police better, and that there were circumstances of which I was ignorant.—"Yes," I replied, "there are things of which I was ignorant, but of which I am so no longer; for instance, a little man, muffled up in a grey great coat, often issues, on dark nights, from a back door of the Tuileries, accompanied by a single attendant, mounts a shabby vehicle, and proceeds to ferret out a certain Signora G——; that little man is yourself; and the whimsical vocalist sacrifices her fidelity to you in favour of Rode, the violin player." At these words the consul, turning his back upon me, and remaining silent, rang the bell, and I withdrew. An aide-de-camp was commissioned to perform the part of a black eunuch to the unfaithful fair one, who indignantly refused to submit to the regulations of the seraglio. She was first deprived of her establishment and pensions, in hope of reducing her to terms by famine; but deeply in love with Rode, she remained inflexible, and rejected the most brilliant offers of the *Pylades* Berthier. She was then compelled to quit Paris; she first retired into the country with her lover; but afterwards both made their escape, and went to Russia, where fortune met them again.

As it was commonly said that war was the only element of the first consul, I urged him to show the world that he could, when it was necessary, govern an empire in a state of calm, and in the midst of pacific enjoyments. But the pacification of the continent was not enough for him; his wish was to disarm England. The rival of France, from remote time, she had become our inveterate enemy, from

the moment that the impulse of the revolution had invested us with a colossal power. Considering the state of Europe, the power and prosperity of the two countries connected by the bonds of peace appeared incompatible. The policy of the first consul and his privy council soon sought the solution of this grave question;—must England be forced to make peace, before we establish a pacific system at home and abroad? The affirmative was decided by necessity and reason. Without a general peace, every other description of peace could only be considered in the light of a suspension of arms.

As after Campo Formio, the result was to threaten Great Britain with an invasion, which resolution engaged the attention of our versatile and capricious minds, camps were formed and occupied by numerous select troops on the shores facing England. A combined fleet was assembled at Brest, under the French and Spanish flag; an effort was made to re-establish our marine; and the port of Boulogne became the principal rendezvous of the flotilla designed to effect the descent. Such was the chimera we then indulged.

On her side, England made great preparations, watching all our movements, blockading our ports and naval roads; and bristling all her coasts with warlike apparatus. She had at that time subject for alarm. I mean the northern league formed against her naval preponderance, and of which the Emperor Paul had declared himself the chief. Its direct object, openly avowed, was to annul the naval system maintained by England; and in virtue of which that power arrogated to herself the empire of the seas.

Every one must be aware how anxious the first consul must have been to impart to his diplomacy all his activity and address, in order to give life to that maritime league of which Paul the First was the soul. All the mobiliary force of the cabinet was made to play either to captivate Paul, to win Prussia, to exasperate Denmark, or drag Sweden upon the field of battle.

Prussia having received the impulse, closed the mouths of the Elbe, the Weser, and the Ems; and took possession of the Hanoverian territory. England now perceived that the object of the quarrel could only be decided by arms. Admirals Hyde Parker and Nelson suddenly sailed to the Baltic with a powerful naval force. Denmark and Sweden made vain preparations to guard the passage of the Sound and defend the approaches to Copenhagen. On the 2nd of April was fought the terrible battle of Copenhagen, in which England triumphed over all the maritime impediments which had been opposed to her ascendency.

Eleven days previous, the imperial palace of St. Petersburg had become the theatre of a catastrophe, which, alone, had changed the aspect of affairs in the North. On the 22nd of March, the Emperor Paul, a monarch equally capricious and violent, and occasionally despotic even to frenzy, was deprived of the throne by the only mode of deposition practicable in a despotic monarchy.

I received by *estafette*,[1] from a foreign banker, the first tragical intelligence of this event; I hurried to the Tuileries, and found the first consul, whose courier had also just arrived from the north, grasping and twisting his despatch, while he walked about in a hurried manner and with an haggard air. "What!" said he, "an emperor not in safety even in the midst of his guards!" In order to appease him, some of my colleagues, myself, and the consul Cambacérès, told him that whatever might be the mode of deposition practised in Russia, luckily the south of Europe was a stranger to such treacherous habits and attempts. But none of our arguments could convince him; his sagacity perceived their hollowness, when he remembered his position and the danger he had run in December. He gave vent to his passion in ejaculations, stampings of the foot, and short fits of rage. I

[1] Express messenger.

never beheld so striking a scene. To the grief which the result of the battle of Copenhagen had inflicted, was now added the poignant mortification which he experienced from the unexpected murder of the Russian potentate, whose friend and ally he had become. Political disappointments thus added additional pangs to his regret. There was an end to the northern league against England.

The tragical death of Paul the First inspired Bonaparte with melancholy ideas, and made his disposition still more suspicious and mistrustful. He dreamt of nothing but conspiracies in the army; and caused several general officers to be arrested, among others Humbert, whom I had some difficulty in saving from his inflexible severity. At the same time, an informer caused the intentions of Bernadotte to be suspected, and severely compromised him. For more than a year Bernadotte had commanded the army of the west, and had his headquarters at Rennes. Nothing could have been objected to his always discreet and moderate operations. The preceding year, during the campaign of Marengo, he had prevented a landing at Quiberon, and the departments of the west continued to show the most complete submission. On several occasions, advantage had been taken of some republican speeches, which had escaped some of the officers of his staff, to raise suspicions in the first consul's mind against him. All of a sudden he was unexpectedly recalled, and fell into disgrace. All that could be made out, for the accusation was sent directly to the first consul's cabinet, was that the accuser pointed out Colonel Simon as having imprudently divulged a plan of military insurrection against the chief magistrate; a plan perfectly chimerical, since they had to march to Paris in order to depose the first consul. It was supposed that there was reality in this pretended plot, and that it was not unconnected; that it was linked with a republican conspiracy, at the head of which Bernadotte was naturally placed, and which extended its ramifications through the whole army.

There were several arrests, and the whole staff of Bernadotte was disorganized, but without much noise; above all, Bonaparte wished to avoid publicity: "Europe," said he, "ought to think that there are no more conspiracies against me." I observed a great reserve about all the particulars which were sent to me, concerning an affair which was more military than civil, and which was connected by very slight points of union with my functions. But I gave Bernadotte, whom I forebore to see, some useful directions, for which he expressed his obligations. A little time after, his brother-in-law, Joseph Bonaparte, arranged his reconciliation with the first consul: it was the second since the 18th Brumaire. By my advice, Bonaparte endeavoured, by well-deserved favours and rewards, to attach so distinguished a statesman and skilful a general to his person.

The vortex of affairs, and progress of foreign politics, fortunately caused a diversion to all these home intrigues. The new Emperor of Russia, declaring himself for another system, caused, in the first instance, all the English sailors who were prisoners to be set at liberty, and a convention signed at St. Petersburg, between Lord St. Helens and the Russian ministers, soon adjusted all differences.

At the same time the Czar gave Count Marckof full powers to negotiate peace with the first consul and his allies. It was sufficiently obvious that the cabinets were inclined towards a pacific system.

England, who towards the end of the year 1800 and the beginning of 1801, had seen herself involved in a new quarrel for the maintenance of her maritime rights, although she had to contend alone with the power of France, now appeared to abjure a system of perpetual warfare against our revolution. That political transition was, in some degree, effected by the resignation of the celebrated Pitt, and by the dissolution of his belligerent ministry. From that time, peace between the cabinet of St. James and that of the Tuileries was considered practicable. It was accelerated by

the results of two rival expeditions into Portugal and Egypt.

The mission of Lucien to Madrid had also a political object; the declaration of war against Portugal by Spain, at the instigation of the first consul, who justly looked upon Portugal as an English colony: the ascendency of his brother over the mind of Charles the Fourth and his queen was without bounds: everything proceeded in the interests of our politics. At the same time when a Spanish army obtained possession of Alentejo, a French army, under the orders of Napoleon's brother-in-law, Leclerc, entered Portugal by way of Salamanca.

In its distress, the court of Lisbon endeavoured to find safety by lavishing its treasures on its invaders. It opened direct negotiations with Lucien, and, on the 6th of June, preliminaries of peace were signed at Badajoz, on a secret subsidy of thirty millions being paid, which were shared between the first consul's brother and the Prince of Peace. Such was the source of the immense fortune of Lucien. The first consul, who wished to occupy Lisbon, was at first outrageous, threatening to recall his brother, and not to recognize the stipulation of Badajoz. Talleyrand and I endeavoured to make him feel the ill effects which would result from such a public *éclat*. Talleyrand founded his arguments, in favour of the basis of the treaty, in the interest of our alliance with Spain, in the happy position thus afforded us of reconciliation with England, who, finding herself excluded from the ports of Portugal, would be anxious to re-enter them; he very adroitly proposed some modifications to the treaty. In fine, the sacrifice of the diamonds of the Princess of Brazil, and a gift to the first consul of ten millions for his private purse, so effectually made him relax in his severity, that he suffered the definitive treaty to be concluded at Madrid.

On their side, the English had just effected a disembarkation in Egypt, in order to wrest that possession from us;

and, on the 20th of March, General Menou lost the battle of Alexandria. Cairo and the principal cities of Egypt successively fell into the power of the Anglo-Turks. At length Menou himself capitulated, on the 7th of August, and found himself compelled to evacuate Alexandria. So vanished the magnificent project of the directory to make a French colony of Egypt, and Bonaparte's still more romantic project of re-establishing by these means the Empire of the East.

The war between England and France having, from that time, no object worthy the trouble of prolonging the struggle, and each of the two countries being so consolidated in its government that neither of the two could alone effect any alteration in the situation of the other, preliminaries of peace were signed at London, on the 1st of October, between M. Otto and Lord Hawkesbury. The news was received with extraordinary demonstrations of joy by both nations.

All misunderstanding between Russia and France had also ceased to exist, the first consul having neglected nothing to gain the son and successor of Paul I. The Russian plenipotentiary, M. Marckof, availing himself of his full powers, immediately after the preliminaries of London, signed a definitive treaty of peace between the Czar and the first consul, to be completed by a new treaty of commerce.

This reconciliation, effected between France and Russia, was a master-stroke for the first consul's party. The extension of his power, both within and without, which he too much abused afterwards, must be dated from that fortunate epoch. It was not, however, without experiencing, on the score of his treaty with Russia, some opposition at home.

When communicated to the Tribunat, where the most obstinate republicans sat, this treaty was sent back to a commission charged to examine it, and to make a report. In this report, the commission declared that the word *subject*, employed in it, had excited surprise, inasmuch as it did not

accord with the idea then entertained of the dignity of French citizens. It was requisite to discuss the treaty in private meetings; and there the tribunes did not the less persevere in pronouncing the word *subject* to be improper, without, however, pretending that this was a sufficient motive for rejecting the treaty.

In the privy council, which took place that evening, we had much difficulty in appeasing the first consul, who thought he perceived in the difficulty raised by the Tribunat an intention to render him unpopular and shake his power. I represented to him, with some energy, after having provided for his perusal a summary of the state of opinion in the capital, that it was important to temporize with the remains of the republican spirit by an apparent deference. He at last yielded to my reasons.

The councillor of state, Fleurieu, was despatched to offer an explanation to the Tribunat, by a note coming from the cabinet of the first consul, in which he declared that for a long time the French government had abjured the principle of dictating any kind of treaty; and that Russia having appeared to desire the mutual guarantee of the two governments against all troubles within and abroad, it had been agreed that neither of them should grant any kind of protection to the enemies of the other; and that it was to obtain this purpose that the articles, in which the word *subject* was used, had been drawn. Everything now appeared satisfactory, and the treaty was approved by the legislative body.

It occasioned, in the cabinet, a more serious incident, which excited in the highest degree the anger of the first consul. In the secret articles of the treaty, the two contracting powers *mutually promised to arrange the affairs of Germany and Italy by common accord.*

It must be obvious how important it was for England to obtain quickly certain proofs of the existence of this first link of the continental diplomacy, which united, to her

detriment, the political interest of the two most powerful empires of Europe, who by that means became the arbiters of her exclusion. The secret articles were therefore sold to her by the weight of gold; and her cabinet, always very generous for similar disclosures, paid to the faithless betrayers the sum of sixty thousand pounds sterling. Being shortly apprized of this diplomatic robbery, the first consul sent for me to the Tuileries, and commenced by accusing at once the police and his ministry for foreign affairs; the police, as incapable of preventing or discovering criminal communications with foreigners; the ministry of M. de Talleyrand, as trafficking in affairs of state. I supported my defence by saying that there had been intrigues at all times which no power could restrain; and when I observed that the suspicions of the first consul fell upon two high personages, I did not hesitate to tell him that I had reason to believe, according to information given me, that the state secret had been divulged by M. R. L., confidential secretary of M. de Talleyrand, and afterwards sent either directly to England, or to M. le Comte d'Antraigues, agent of Louis XVIII., by M. B——, the elder, one of the proprietors of the *Journal des Débats*, a particular friend of M. R. L——. I added that I had strong reasons to believe that this individual was a secret correspondent of the foreign powers, but that at all times it was difficult for the police to change mere hints or suspicions into material proofs; that it could only follow the track. The first impulse of the consul was to order that the two accused should be brought before a military commission; I remonstrated; on his side, M. de Talleyrand alleged that the secretary of M. de Ma[illegible]f, or even perhaps of some clerk of the Russian offic[illegible]ght be equally suspected of this infidelity; but there w[illegible]t a sufficiently [illegible]ng interval, from the signature of t[illegible]cument to its [illegible]eing divulged, to permit the surmise t[illegible]t had gone to St. Petersburg previous to reaching London.

But, however that may be, M. R. L. received an order of

banishment, and went to Hamburg; M. B., the elder, was in appearance worse treated; the gens-d'armes deported him from brigade to brigade to the Isle of Elba. There his exile was much mitigated.

I did not fail, in the course of this affair, to remind the first consul that, formerly, it was a maxim in *haute diplomatie*, that after the lapse of forty days there was no longer any secret in Europe for cabinets directed by statesmen. It was on this basis that he afterwards wished to shape his diplomatic chancery.

In the interim, the Marquis of Cornwallis came to France as plenipotentiary ambassador, to negotiate a definitive peace. He went to Amiens, which had been selected for the conferences; but the treaty experienced unexpected delays, which did not prevent the first consul from industriously pursuing two projects of great importance, one relative to Italy, the other to St. Domingo. I shall have occasion to speak of the first; as to the second, the execution of which Bonaparte considered as most urgent, its object was the reconquest of the colony of St. Domingo, of which the armed negroes had rendered themselves masters.

I did not participate, in this respect, the views of the privy council, nor of the council of state, where my ancient colleague and friend, M. Malouet, a man of honourable character, had just taken his seat; but he looked on this great affair of St. Domingo with prejudices which impaired the rectitude of his judgment. His plans, chiefly directed against the liberty and power of the negroes, prevailed in part, but were ruined by the awkwardness and unskilfulness of our staff officers. I received from Sonthonax, formerly so celebrated at St. Domingo, some well written and soundly reasoning memoirs, respecting the method to be pursued for resuming our influence; but Sonthonax was himself in so much disgrace, that there was no possibility of making the first consul adopt his ideas; he even gave me a formal order to banish him from Paris. Fleurieu, Malouet, and all the

colonial party, prevailed. It was decided that, after the conquest, *slavery should be maintained*, conformably to the laws and regulations, anterior to 1789; and that the slave trade and their importation should take place according to the existing laws at that epoch. The result is known—the loss of our armament and the humiliation of our arms. But the true cause of this disastrous expedition must be sought in the recess of the first consul's heart; in this respect, Berthier and Duroc knew more than the minister of police. But could I be mistaken for a moment? The first consul ardently seized the *happy* opportunity of sending away a great number of regiments and general officers formed in the school of Moreau, whose reputation pained him, and whose influence with the army, if not a subject of alarm, was at least to him one of restraint and inquietude. He equally comprised in the expedition the general officers whom he judged to be not sufficiently devoted to his person and interest, or whom he considered as still adhering to republican institutions. The malcontents, who have always more or less influence on public opinion, no longer kept any measures with respect to this enterprise; and such were the rumours, that my bulletins, in which they were faithfully reported, became alarming. "Well," said Bonaparte to me one day, "your jacobins malignantly say that they are the soldiers and friends of Moreau, whom I am sending to perish at St. Domingo; they are grumbling maniacs. Let them talk on. No government could proceed if people were to allow themselves to be impeded by defamation and calumnies. Only endeavour to create for me a better public spirit." "That miracle," I replied, "is reserved for you, and it will not be your first trial of the sort."

When everything was ready, the expedition, consisting of twenty-three ships of the line, and twenty-two thousand men, sailed from Brest in order to reduce the colony. The assent of England had been previously required, for the peace was not yet concluded.

Before the signature of the definitive treaty, Bonaparte put the second project, which had engaged his attention, into execution. A *consulte* of Cisalpins having been convoked at Lyon, he went there in person, in January, 1802, was received with much pomp, opened the consulte, and got himself elected president, not of the Cisalpine, but of the *Italian* republic; thus revealing his ulterior views upon the whole of Italy. On the other hand, that same republic, the independence of which was guaranteed by treaty, beheld French troops establishing themselves on her territory instead of evacuating it; it thus became an appendage of France, or rather of Bonaparte's power.

In arrogating to himself the presidency of Italy, he had authorized the rupture of the negotiations; but he was, in this respect, without any fear, well knowing that the English ministry were not in a condition to resist, and, moreover, supporting himself by the secret stipulations consented to by Russia. There was so general a persuasion of the necessity of peace in England, and of the impossibility of obtaining better conditions by a protracted contest, that Lord Cornwallis, on the 25th of March, took upon himself to sign the definitive treaty, known under the name of the peace of Amiens, which concluded a nine years' war, as bloody as it was destructive.

It was obvious to any statesman that the condition in which Malta was left, was the weak part of the treaty. I expressed this opinion frankly in the council; but the public mind was in such a state of intoxication, after the signature of the preliminaries, that my precaution was considered unseasonable and vexatious. I, nevertheless, observed, in the debates of the British parliament, that one of the most considerable cabinet ministers of that country viewed, in the same light as I did, the stipulations relative to the possession of Malta. In general, the new opposition of the old ministers and their friends considered the peace as an armed truce, the duration of which was incompatible with the

honour and prosperity of Great Britain. In fact, of all her conquests, she only preserved Trinidad and Ceylon, while France retained all hers. On our side, moreover, peace was a triumph to the principles of our revolution, which derived stability from the brilliancy and attraction of success. Besides it was in reality a happy stroke of fortune for Bonaparte.

But could it be imagined that he would only use it for the good of France? I had seen and known enough of him to believe that he would employ it in order to perpetuate and strengthen his authority. It was also obvious to me, that the enlightened class of the English nation, and the friends of liberty in France, did not view without regret an event which seemed for ever to consolidate the power of the sword.

I commenced this new era by communicating to Bonaparte a memorial, which I had previously taken care he should require me to draw up, on the means of procuring peace at home. After having pointed out the shades and vicissitudes of opinion, and the last agitations of different parties, I represented that France could in a few years obtain the same preponderance over pacific Europe, as her victories had given her over Europe in arms; that the good wishes and submission of France applied less to the warrior, than to the restorer of social order; that called to preside over the destinies of thirty millions of Frenchmen, he ought to make it his study to become their benefactor and father, rather than consider himself as a dictator and military chief; that, if decided, henceforth, to become the protector of religion, good morals, the arts, the sciences, all that improves society, he would be sure by his example to prompt all Frenchmen to the observance of the laws, decorum, and domestic virtue; that in fine, with respect to the relations of France with foreign powers, there was every security, France having never been either so great or so powerful since Charlemagne; that she had just established a durable

order of things in Germany and Italy; that she had disposed of Spain; that she, moreover, had found again among the Turks that ancient friendly feeling which attached them to the French; that, besides, the auxiliary states, established beyond the Rhine and the Alps as a barrier, expected nothing at his hand but salutary modifications and reforms; that, in a word, his glory and the interest of the world required the consolidation of a state of peace which was also necessary to the well-being of the republic.

I knew that we were approaching the moment when his secret views would be disclosed. For more than a year past he had been prompted by the advice of the consuls Lebrun and Cambacérès, and the councillor of state, Portalis, to a design of re-establishing religion and recalling all the emigrants into the bosom of their country. Many projects on this subject had been read in council: personally consulted on these great measures, I immediately admitted that religion could not be neglected by the government of the first consul, and if established by his hands, she might afford him substantial support. But I did not share the opinion that we ought to come to a concordat with the court of Rome, as was proposed. I represented that it was a great political error to introduce into the bosom of a state, where the principles of the revolution had prevailed, a foreign domination, capable of causing troubles; that the intervention of the head of the Roman church was at least superfluous; that it would conclude by producing difficulties and probably disputes; that, moreover, it was reviving, in the state, that mixture of the spiritual and the temporal, which was at once absurd and fatal; that all that was necessary was to proclaim the free exercise of public worship, but securing incomes and salaries for that worship which the majority of Frenchmen professed.

I perceived shortly that this project was nothing more than a stepping-stone to another project of still higher importance, and of which the poet Fontanes had suggested the

idea. He had presented to the first consul through his sister Eliza, to whom he was attached, an elaborate memorial, which had for its object to induce him to follow the example of Charlemagne, in employing the great officers and the priests for the re-establishment of his empire, and, for this purpose, to avail himself of the aid of the Roman see, as Pepin and Charlemagne had done.

The re-establishment of the Empire of Charlemagne had also occurred to my thoughts, with this difference, that the poet Fontanes and his party wished to employ the elements of the ancient régime for the purpose of this resurrection, while I maintained that it was requisite to employ the men and the principles of the revolution. I did not pretend to exclude the old royalists from participating in the government, but in such a proportion as should always leave them in the minority. This project, moreover (and it was that which had most charms for Bonaparte), appeared to me premature as to its execution; it required to be matured, prepared, and brought about with great address. I caused it to be postponed.

But, in other respects, my system of discretion and delay ill accorded with that impatience and decision of will which characterized the first consul. Ever since the month of June, in the preceding year (1801), Cardinal Gonzalvi, secretary of state to the court of Rome, had come to Paris by his invitation, and there had drawn the bases of a convention, which the first consul made known to his council of state, on the 10th of August following.

The philosophical party, of which I passed for the protector, had exhibited indocility, and in the council itself had represented, that however powerful the first consul was, it was necessary to take precautions in effecting the re-establishment of the Catholic worship, since they had not only to fear the opposition of the old partisans of philosophical and republican ideas, which were in great numbers among the public authorities, but also that of the principal military

men, who manifested great opposition to religious ideas. Yielding to the desire of not losing a part of his popularity, by giving too abrupt a shock to prejudices, which had their source in the then present state of society, the first consul, in conjunction with his council, consented to delay the re-establishment of the peace of the church, and to cause it to be preceded by the publication of the maritime peace.

On this occasion I obtained concessions with more facility, on the subject of a measure relative to the emigrants. Here my functions placed me in a condition to exercise still greater influence; and, therefore, my views, contained in two memorials, were adopted, with some slight alterations.

The list of the emigrants, which composed nine volumes, exhibited a nomenclature of about 150,000 individuals; out of which there were not above 80,000 left, whose fate was to be decided; the rest having successively returned or perished. I succeeded in obtaining an order that no emigrants should be definitely erased *en masse*, except by an act of *amnesty;* and that they should remain for ten years under the *surveillance* of the high police, reserving to myself the right of removing them from their residence. Many categories of emigrants, attached to the French princes, and who remained enemies of the government, were finally retained on the list, to the amount of a thousand persons, of whom five hundred were to be designated in the course of the year. There was an important exception to the restitution of the undisposed-of property, belonging to those of the emigrants whose names were erased from the list; namely, that of woods and forests, containing four hundred acres; but this exception was nearly illusive with regard to old families. The first consul, of his own accord, authorized frequent restitution of plantations, in order to obtain creatures among the restored emigrants.

It had been equally decreed, that the promulgation of this law of amnesty should be deferred till the general peace, as well as a project of a law for the establishment of a legion of

honour. We at length reached the epoch so impatiently expected for the effecting of these great measures. As early as the 6th of April, 1802, the concordat, on ecclesiastical affairs, signed on the preceding 15th of July, was sent for approbation to an extraordinary assembly of the legislative body. It received the vote of the Tribunat through the organ of Lucien Bonaparte, who, on his return from Madrid, had taken his place among the tribunes. On this occasion, he emphatically pronounced an eloquent discourse, corrected by the poet Fontanes, whose pen had become devoted to the torrent of the new power, which was about to become for him a golden Pactolus.

Easter Sunday was selected for the solemn promulgation of the concordat, which was done at the Tuileries by the first consul in person, in the first instance, and repeated throughout the whole of Paris by the twelve mayors of the capital. A religious ceremony was got up at Nôtre Dame, to return thanks to Heaven, as well for the conclusion of the treaty of Amiens as of that of the concordat. I had informed the consuls that they would only be attended by the generals and officers on service ; a kind of league having been formed among the superior officers who were then in Paris, not to assist at the solemnity. An expedient was quickly devised, for it was not safe yet awhile to employ constraint. Berthier, in his character of war-minister, invited all the superior generals and officers to a splendid military breakfast, at the conclusion of which, he placed himself at the head, and induced them to go to the Tuileries, in order to pay their respects to the first consul. There Bonaparte, whose cavalcade was ready, desired them to follow him to the metropolitan church, and none of them dared to refuse. Through his progress, he was saluted by public acclamations.

The re-establishment of catholicism was followed closely by a *senatus-consulte*, in granting an amnesty to the emigrants. This act, which was very much cried up,

singularly alarmed the acquirers of national property. It required all the firmness of the administration, and all the vigilance of my ministry, to obviate the serious inconveniences which might have resulted from collisions between the old and new proprietors. I was seconded by my colleagues of the home department, and the council of state, which regulated the jurisprudence of this matter in favour of the interest of the revolution.

As may be seen, the revolution was on the defensive, and the republic without guarantee or security. All the designs of the first consul tended to transform the government into a monarchy. The institution of the legion of honour was also at that epoch a subject of alarm and inquietude to the ancient friends of liberty; it was generally regarded as a monarchical plaything which impaired those principles of equality which had obtained so easy a possession of the public mind. This disposition of public opinion, which I did not allow to remain in the dark, made no impression on the mind of the first consul, nor on that of his brother Lucien, who was a great promoter of the project; the mockery was carried so far as to have it represented in the name of government, by Rœderer, a salaried orator, as an institution auxiliary to all republican laws. A strong and well-argued opposition was found in the Tribunat; the law was designated as attacking the foundations of public liberty. But the government had already in its hands so many elements of power, that it was sure to reduce all opposition to a feeble minority.

I perceived, day by day, how much easier it was to get possession of the sources of opinion in the civil hierarchy than in the military order, where the opposition was often more serious from its being more covered. The counter-police of the palace was very active and vigilant in this respect; the officers called malcontents were suspended, exiled, or imprisoned. But the discontent soon degenerated into irritation among the generals and colonels, who, deeply

imbued with republican ideas, saw clearly that Bonaparte only trampled on our institutions in order to advance more freely to absolute power.

For some time past, it was notorious that he concerted measures with his partizans for acquiring, under legitimate pretences, a perpetuity of power. It was in vain that I represented in the council that a fitting time was not yet come, that ideas were not yet sufficiently matured, to estimate the advantages of monarchical stability; that there would be even a risk of disgusting the *élite* of the army, and those individuals from whom the first consul derived his temporary power; that if he had, till now, exercised it to public satisfaction, because he had, at the same time, exhibited himself in the character of a moderate ruler and skilful general, he ought to take care not to lose the advantages of so splendid a position by placing himself either in too narrow a defile or on too rapid an acclivity. But I made very little impression; I was not even long in perceiving that a kind of reserve was maintained towards me, and that, besides the deliberations of the privy council, mysterious conferences were held at the house of Cambacérès.

I penetrated into the secret, and desiring to act as much in favour of the first consul's interest as well as of the state, I imparted, with as much discretion as possible, a particular impulse to my friends who had seats in the senate. My object was to counteract and invalidate the plans concerted at the house of Cambacérès, and of which I had no favourable opinion.

Our friends, on the same day, dispersed themselves about among the most influential and most accredited senators. There crying up Bonaparte, who, after having established a general peace had just restored our altars, and attempted to heal the last wounds of our civil discords, these wise organs added, that the first consul held the reins of government with a firm hand, that his administration was irreproachable,

and that it appertained to the senate to fulfil the general wish by prolonging the supreme power beyond the ten years of his magistracy ; that this act of national gratitude would have the double advantage of imparting more weight to the senate, and more stability to the government. Our friends took special care to have it thought that they were the organs of the desires of the first consul ; and the success, at first, surpassed our hopes.

On the 8th of May, the conservative senate assembled, and wishing, in the name of the French people, to testify its gratitude to the consuls of the republic, issued the *senatus consultum* which re-elected citizen Bonaparte, first consul, for ten years beyond the ten years fixed by the article 34 of the additional act of the 13th of December, 1799. A message immediately communicated this decree to the first consul, the legislative body, and the Tribunat.

One must have witnessed, like me, all the marks which the first consul gave of his anger and constraint, to conceive an idea of them. His partisans were in consternation. The reply to the message was couched in ambiguous terms ; it was insinuated that the senate dispensed the public remuneration with too niggardly a hand : a tone of hypocritical sentiment reigned throughout ; and this prophetic phrase was remarked, "fortune has smiled upon the republic, but fortune is fickle ; and how many men have there been loaded with her favours who have lived too long by several years."

It was nearly the same language as Augustus employed in a similar situation.—But the ten years added, by the senate, to the actual duration of power, could not satisfy the impatient ambition of the first consul ; he only saw in this act of prorogation a first step in order to assist him in more rapidly ascending the summit of power. Determined on carrying it with the same ardour as on the field of battle, two days after, that is to say on the 10th of May, he urged the two other consuls, whom the constitution invested with

no authority, to institute a decree purporting that the French people should be consulted on this question :— "Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be consul for life?" The reading of this decree, and of the letter of the first consul to the senate, was going on when I arrived to take my seat. I must confess, in my turn, that I had to collect all my energy to restrain within me the feelings by which I was agitated during the reading. I perceived that all was over, but that it was still necessary to be firm, in order to moderate, if possible, the rapid invasion of a power henceforward without counterpoise.

This act of fraudulent intrusion caused at first, among the highest authorities, a rather unfavourable impression. But already the springs of action were prepared. In a short time the senate, the legislative body, and the Tribunat, were worked upon with venal success. It was demonstrated to the senate, that what it had done was considerably behind what was expected of it; it was proved to the legislative body and the Tribunat, that the first consul, in wishing the French people to be consulted, merely paid an homage due to the sovereignty of the French people, to that grand principle which the revolution had so solemnly consecrated, and which had survived so many political storms. The captious arguments brought forward by the confidents and hirelings, obtained the adhesion of the majority; to those who objected, it was thought sufficient to say, "Let us wait, the nation will definitively decide."

While the registers for the inscription of the public votes were mockingly opened in the secretariats of all the departments of government, in the offices of all the tribunals, of all the mayors, and of all the public functionaries, there happened a serious incident, which transpired, notwithstanding all the care that was taken to suppress the particulars of it. At a dinner, at which some twenty discontented officers had met with some old republicans and violent patriots, the ambitious projects of the first consul

were brought upon the tapis without any restraint. When their spirits had once become elevated by the fumes of wine, some of the parties went so far as to say, that it was indispensable to make the new Cæsar share the fate of the former, but not in the senate, where there were nothing but subjected and slavish minds, but in the middle of the army, at a grand parade at the Tuileries. So great was the excitement, that a colonel of the 12th regiment of hussars, Fournier Sarlovèse, famous, at that time, for his dexterity as a good shot, affirmed that he would pledge himself not to miss Bonaparte at fifty paces' distance. Such was, at least, the imprudent proposal that L., another of the guests, maintained on the same evening to have heard, and went immediately to denounce to his friend, General Menou, with the intention of obtaining access, by his means, to the first consul; for Menou, since his return from Egypt, was in high favour. In fact, he himself took the informer to the Tuileries, and arrived there at the same moment in which Bonaparte was about to get into his carriage, in order to go to the opera. The first consul heard the accusation, gave orders to his military police, and immediately proceeded to his box at the theatre. He was there informed that Colonel Fournier was at that time in the house. The order was instantly given to his aide-de-camp, Junot, to arrest and carry him before me, as a person accused of conspiracy against the safety of the state.

Apprised beforehand of the imprudent and blamable intemperance of language of five or six hot-brained men, heated by wine, excited by the recollections of liberty, and the open or tacit approbation of some twenty guests, I interrogated and reprimanded the Colonel; I listened to the expression of his repentance, while I did not disguise that his affair might become extremely serious after an examination of his papers. He assured me that he feared nothing on that head. I thought at first of hushing up the matter, by reducing the rigour of the first consul into a simple military

correction. But here an accident occurred to aggravate the offence. The Colonel passed the night at the prefecture, and the next day police agents conducted him to his own house, in order to assist in the examination of his papers. Although there was no indication of any meditated attempt, the idea that poetical squibs against Bonaparte might be found, alarmed him for the consequences, and without permitting his design to be suspected, he locked his keepers in his room, and made his escape. The rage of the first consul may be conceived. Luckily, it had to vent itself against the simplicity of the agents of the prefecture, and that I, on my side, had the evening before furnished him with irrefragable proof, that the indiscretion of the military dinner had come to my knowledge. Nothing could have excused me, if so culpable a conversation, carried on before so large a number of assembled persons, had come to the ears of the chief magistrate without the head of the police having any knowledge of it. I brought to Bonaparte the papers of the Colonel, whose hiding-place I undertook to find; and I entreated him, after the examination, not to give the affair the importance of a conspiracy, as it would be doubly impolitic, first with regard to the army, and next with regard to his position as first consul, considering that the whole nation was at that moment called to give its suffrage on the question of the consulship for life. As I had promised, the Colonel was discovered and arrested, but with a military display which to me appeared ridiculous. The *chef d'escadron*, Donnadieu, who has since become a general, and the same who now pretends to celebrity, was simultaneously arrested, and sent with Colonel Fournier to a dungeon in the Temple. Thanks to my representations, the catastrophe was not tragical; it was only marked by destitutions, exile, and disgrace, and by rewards to the informer.

The first consul only pursued the object of his ambition with more fervour. For six weeks the ministry was busily engaged in collecting and transcribing the registers in which

the suffrages for the consulship for life were inscribed. Got up by a special committee, the report presented 3,568,185 votes in the affirmative, and only 9,074 in the negative. On the 2nd of August, a *senatus consultum*, called organic, conferred the perpetual power on the first consul Bonaparte. Very little importance was attached to the manner in which this proceeding was managed. The greater part of the citizens who had voted in favour of investing him with the chief magistracy for life, considered themselves as re-establishing the monarchical system in France, and with it its stability and repose. The senate believed, or feigned to believe, that Napoleon was obeying the popular will, and that sufficient guarantees had been given in his reply to the message of the first body in the state. "Liberty," said the first consul, "equality, the prosperity of France, shall be secured.—I am happy," he added, with a tone of inspiration, "to have been called by the order of that power whence all emanates, to restore order, justice, and equality on the earth."

These last words would have been sufficient to make the people believe that he was born to command the universe, so singular were the ways by which his fortune had arrived at the highest point of elevation ; and so much capacity did he display in governing men with *éclat.* Perhaps more fortunate than Alexander and Cæsar, he might have reached and embraced the great chimera of universal power, if his passions had not obscured his views, and if the thirst of tyrannical domination had not at last revolted the popular mind.

All was not yet accomplished in this sleight-of-hand trick (*escamotage*) of the consulship for life ; and, on the 6th of August, an organic *senatus consultum* of the constitution of the year XIII., made its appearance from the workshop of the two consuls, his satellites, framed by the familiars of the cabinet, and proposed *in the name of the government.*

Since the French enthusiastically adopted the government

which was to be in future comprised in the person of the first consul, he took care not to give them time to cool ; he was moreover persuaded, that his authority would never be entirely established while there remained in the state a power which did not directly emanate from himself.

Such was the spirit of the *senatus consultum* of the 6th of August imposed on the senate. It may be considered as a fifth constitution, by which Bonaparte became master of the majority of votes in the senate, as well for the elections as for the deliberations, leaving to the senators, henceforward under his thumb, the right of changing the public institutions by means of *organic senatus consulta ;* reducing the Tribunat to a nullity, by diminishing one half of the members by dismission ; by depriving the legislative body of the right of sanctioning treaties by its approbation ; and, finally, by concentrating all the powers of government in his single will. Moreover, the council of state was recognized as a constituted authority ; finally, the consul for life caused himself to be invested with the noblest prerogative of sovereign authority, the right of pardoning. He recompensed the services and the docility of the two consuls, his acolytes, by also investing them for life with their consular functions. Such was the fifth constitution, given to a nation whose character is as light as it is inconsiderate, having but very few correct ideas respecting political and social organization, and who then was passing, without suspecting it, from a republic to an empire. One more step remained to be taken, but who could prevent it ?

In my own mind, I saw nothing in this but an ill-formed and dangerous piece of workmanship, and I expressed that opinion without disguise. I said to the first consul himself, that he had just declared himself the head of a life monarchy, which, according to my view, had no other basis but his victories and sword.

On the 15th of August, the anniversary of his birth, solemn prayers were offered up to God for having, in His

ineffable bounty, granted to France a man who had deigned to consent to bear the burden of supreme power for his whole life.

The *senatus consultum*, of the 6th of August, also conferred on the first consul the prerogative of presiding over the senate. Eager to make use of it, and still more to sound the public feeling with regard to him, Bonaparte went in great pomp, on the 21st, to the Luxembourg, attended by his two colleagues, his ministers, his council of state, and a brilliant escort. Troops under arms, and in the best order, lined both sides of the street from the Tuileries to the palace of the Luxembourg. Having taken his seat, the first consul received the oath of all the senators; M. de Talleyrand then read a report on the subject of the indemnities granted to different princes of Germany, and moreover presented several projects of *senatus consulta*, among others, that which reunited to France the Isle of Elba, since become so famous, as the first place of exile to the very individual who then was reputed the man of Destiny. What a remembrance! What an association!

The procession, in going and returning, was not saluted by any acclamations, nor any sign of approbation on the part of the people, notwithstanding the demonstrations and salutations made by the first consul, and especially his brothers, to the crowd assembled behind the soldiers which lined the way. This gloomy silence, and the kind of affectation of most of the citizens in not taking their hats off on the passage of their chief magistrate, deeply wounded the first consul. Perhaps, on this occasion, he recalled to mind the well-known maxim, "The silence of the people is a lesson to kings"; a maxim which that very evening was placarded and read next day at the Tuileries, and in some of the public squares.

As he did not fail to impute this chilling reception to the *maladresse* of the administration, and the little zeal of his friends, I reminded him that he had ordered me to prepare

nothing factitious, and I added, "Notwithstanding the fusion of the Gauls with the French, we always remain the same people; we always remain like those ancient Gauls who were represented as incapable of bearing either liberty or oppression." "What do you mean?" he asked with animation. "I mean to say that the Parisians have imagined they perceived, in the last dispositions of government, the total loss of liberty, and too obvious a tendency towards absolute power." "I could not," replied he, "govern six weeks in this pacific vacuum if, instead of being the master, I only was an image of authority." "But be at once paternal, affable, strong, and just, and you will easily reconquer what you appear to have lost." "There is an oddity and caprice in public opinion, which I shall be able to improve," said he to me as he turned his back.

I had a secret presentiment that my dismissal was not far off; I no longer doubted of it after this last interview. Moreover, a knowledge of the manœuvres of my enemies could not have escaped me; I had powerful ones who incessantly watched for an opportunity to overthrow me. My opposition to the last measures furnished them with a pretext. Not only Lucien and Joseph were against me, but also their sister, Eliza, a woman haughty, nervous, passionate, dissolute, and devoured by the two passions of love and ambition. She was influenced, as has been seen, by the poet Fontanes, in whom she was wrapped up, and to whom she, at that time, opened all the gates of favour and fortune. Timid and cautious in politics, Fontanes never acted himself except under the influence of a coterie, which passed for religious and monarchical; this coterie controlled a portion of the journals, and had its own romantic poet, making a poem of Christianity, and a jargon of the French tongue. Proud of his success, of his favour, and of his little literary senate, Fontanes was inflated to the last degree, in being able to introduce, to the illustrious imitator of Charlemagne, the literary novices, whose flights he superintended, and

who thought that they, as well as himself, had a call to reconstitute society with the assistance of old monarchical ideas.

This Celadon of literature, an author as elegant as pure, did not dare to attack me openly; but in clandestine memorials, which he addressed to the first consul, he cried down all the liberal doctrines and institutions, and endeavoured to throw suspicion on all the noted characters produced by the revolution, by representing them as the inveterate enemies of the unity of power. His theme and object was to restore Charlemagne in Napoleon, in order that the revolution might find rest, and be merged in a great and powerful empire. This was the chimera of the day, or rather such was known to be the hobby of the first consul, and his intimate friends. On this account, all candidates for places, favours, and fortune, did not fail to model their plans and views on this basis, with more or less exaggeration and extravagance. About this period also appeared, among the fabricators of secret writings, the pamphleteer F., first the agent of the agents of Louis XVIII., afterwards the agent of Lucien, when in London, at the time of the preliminaries, whence he had written in a positive and conceited style, numbers of paltry articles respecting the springs and operations of a government, which he was not able to comprehend. Pensioned for some reports, which reached me anonymously from the cabinet, he grew bold, and profiting by the favour of Lavalette, the postmaster-general, he caused the first essays of a correspondence, which afterwards became more regular, to be conveyed to the first consul. Shaping his speeches by the opinions of the officers of state, with which he made himself acquainted, he descanted right or wrong, on Charlemagne, Louis XIV., on the social order, talking of reconstruction, unity of power, monarchy, all things, of course, quite incompatible with the jacobins, even with those whom he called with conceit, the *hommes forts* of the revolution. This officious correspondent, while he

collected everything that was said in drawing-rooms and coffee-houses, fabricated a thousand tales against me and the general police, of which he made a bugbear ; such were his instructions.

At length all the materials being ready, and the occasion being favourable (Duroc and Savary having been adroitly sounded), it was resolved, in a meeting at Morfontaine, Joseph's residence, that, in the next family council, which Cambacérès and Lebrun should attend, a memorial should be read, in which, without attacking me personally, an effort should be made to prove, that, since the establishment of the consulate for life and the general peace, the ministry of police was a useless and dangerous power ; useless against the royalists, who, now disarmed and subdued, only required to rally round the government ; dangerous as being of republican institution, and being a sort of *paratonnerre* to those incurable anarchists who found therein pay and protection. From thence it was inferred that it would be impolitic to leave so great a power in the hands of a single man; that it was consigning to his mercy the whole machine of government. There came, next, a project drawn up by Rœderer, the factotum of Joseph, the object of which was to concentrate the functions of the police in the minister of justice, namely in the hands of Regnier, under the name of grand judge.

When I was informed of this hotch-potch, and before the decree of the consuls was signed, I could not help telling my friends, that I was superseded by a *grosse bête*, and it was true. The dull and heavy Regnier was never called by any other name, from that time, but that of the *gros juge*.

I did nothing to parry the blow, so prepared was I for it. Accordingly my confidence and tranquillity astonished the first consul, who, after having transacted business with me the last time, he said to me, "M. Fouché, you have well served the government, which will not confine itself to the rewards which it has just conferred upon you ; for from this

time, you will constitute a portion of the first body of the state. It is with regret that I part with a man of your merit; but it has been indispensable to prove to Europe, that I have frankly united with the pacific system, and that I confidently reposed on the love of Frenchmen. In the new arrangement, which I have just adopted, the police will henceforward be no more than a branch of the ministry of justice; and it would not have been proper to confer a secondary place upon you. But be assured that I will neither give up your advice nor your services—there is no disgrace in this case; and do not give ear to the idle gossip of the drawing-rooms of the Faubourg Saint Germain, or to that of the Tabagies,[1] where the old orators of the clubs assemble, at whom we have so often laughed together."

After thanking him for the testimonials of satisfaction which he deigned to give me, I did not dissemble that the changes which he had thought fit to decide on had by no means taken me by surprise. "What, you had some idea of it?" exclaimed he. "Without being precisely certain," I replied, "I had prepared myself for it, in consequence of certain hints and whisperings which reached my ears."

I begged him to believe that no personal interest entered into the composition of my regret; that I was only moved by the extreme solicitude which I had always felt for his person and government; that these sentiments induced me to beg permission to send him, in writing, my last reflections on the present condition of affairs. "Communicate to me all you wish, citizen senator," he rejoined; "all that comes from you will always command my attention."

I requested and obtained an audience for the next day, in which I proposed to furnish him with a detailed statement of the state of the secret funds belonging to my department.

[1] When smoking became in fashion, a room in many of the coffee-houses was fitted up for the reception of those who had that taste. It was called a Tabagie. During the Revolution members of the different clubs met in those rooms, where, under the pretence of enjoying a pipe, they discoursed on political affairs.—*English Editor.*

I went immediately to compile my closing report, for which I had already provided notes; it was brief and nervous. I began by representing to the first consul that, in my eyes, nothing was less certain than the continuance of peace, a circumstance which I endeavoured to prove by laying open the germs of more than one future war. I added, that in such a state of things, and while public opinion was not favourable to the encroachments of power, it would be impolitic to divest the supreme magistracy of the security afforded by a vigilant police; that far from slumbering in imprudent security at a moment, when the permanence of the executive authority had been abruptly decided, it was expedient to conciliate public opinion, and attach all parties to the new order of things; that this could not be effected, except by abjuring all kinds of prejudices and dislikes against certain men; that, although disapproving the measures which had prevailed in the council, I had always expressed myself in the interest of the first consul, as much as any of his most devoted and intimate servants; that our intentions were in all cases the same, but our views and measures were different; that, if there was a perseverance in erroneous views, the issue would be, without intending it, an intolerable oppression or a counter-revolution; that it was more especially indispensable to avoid confiding the public affairs to the mercy of imprudent hands, or of a coterie of political eunuchs, who, at the first shock, would surrender the state to royalists and foreigners; that it was in bold opinions and in new-created interests that a substantial support was to be looked for; that the support of the army would not suffice to maintain a power, too colossal not to excite the greatest alarm in Europe; that too much solicitude could not be shown not to commit the new destinies of France to the chances of new wars, which would of necessity flow from the armed truce in which the respective powers at present reposed; that before re-entering the arena, it was requisite to be assured of the affection of the

people in the provinces, and to rally round government, not disturbers, anarchists, and counter-revolutionists, but straightforward men of character, who would find no security nor well-being for themselves, except by maintaining it; that they were to be found among the men of 1789, and all the discreet friends of liberty, who, detesting the excesses of the revolution, looked to the establishment of a strong and moderate government; and, in fine, that in the precarious situation in which France and Europe then were, the chief of the state ought not to keep his sword in the scabbard, and resign himself to a gratifying security, except when surrounded by his friends, and preserved by them. Then came the application of my views and system to the different parties which divided the state, parties whose passions and colours, it is true, became weaker and weaker every day; but whom a shock, an imprudence, repeated faults, and a new war, might awaken and bring in contact.

The next day I presented to him this memoir, which was in some sort my political testament; he received it with an affected affability. I next placed before him a detailed account of my secret management; and seeing with surprise that I had an enormous reserve of near two millions four hundred thousand francs (£100,000), "Citizen senator," said he to me, "I shall be more generous and equitable than Sieyes was in respect to that poor devil Roger-Ducos, in the division of the funds of the expiring directory; keep the half of the sum which you consigned to me; it is not too much as a mark of my personal and private satisfaction; the other half will go into the treasury of my private police, which, in following your sagacious advice, will receive a new impulse, and on the subject of which I must entreat you to furnish me often with your ideas."

Affected by this conduct, I thanked the first consul for thus raising me to the level of the best remunerated men of his government; (he had just conferred upon me the sena-

torship of Aix); and I protested that I should always remain devoted to the interest of his glory.

I was sincere, persuaded then, as I am now, that in suppressing the general police, he had no other view than to disembarrass himself of an institution, which being incapable of saving what he had himself overthrown, appeared to him more formidable than useful; it was the instrument which he at that time feared, more than the hands which had the direction of it. But he had nevertheless yielded to an intrigue, by suffering himself to be deluded on the score of the motives alleged against me by my adversaries. In one word, Bonaparte, secured by the general peace against the machinations of the royalists, imagined that he had no longer any other enemies than those of the revolution; and as he was incessantly told that these men were attached to a department of government, which, dating its birth from the revolution, protected its interest and defended its doctrines, he abolished it, by that means hoping to remain the arbiter of the mode in which he should, from that time, please to exercise his power.

I returned into private life with a feeling of content and domestic happiness, the sweets of which I had accustomed myself to taste in the midst of the greatest affairs. On the other hand, I found myself in so superior a condition of fortune and consideration, that I felt myself to be neither injured nor fallen. My enemies were disconcerted by it. I even acquired in the senate a marked influence on the most honourable of my colleagues, but I was in no way tempted to abuse it; I even abstained from turning it to profit, for I was aware that there were many eyes upon me. I was spending time happily in my estate of Pont Carré, seldom coming to Paris, in the autumn of 1802, when it pleased the first consul to give me a public mark of favour and confidence. I was called upon to constitute a part of a commission charged with holding a conference with the deputies of the different Swiss Cantons, a country too near France

not to be influenced by its powerful interference. By its geographical position, Switzerland appeared destined to be the bulwark of that most accessible part of France, which possesses no other military frontiers than its passes ; and no other guards than its peasantry. Under this point of view, the political situation of Switzerland was the more likely to engage the attention of the first consul, that he had not a little contributed, after the peace of Campo Formio, to induce the directory to invade and occupy it with troops. His experience, and the comprehension of his views, caused him to perceive that, this once, it was expedient to avoid the same errors and the same excesses. His measures were much more adroit and skilful.

The independence of Switzerland had just been recognized by the treaty of Lunéville ; this treaty secured to her the right of providing herself with such a government as best suited her. She thought herself indebted to the first consul for her independence, who fully expected that the Swiss would make an abusive exercise of their emancipation. In fact, they were torn to pieces by two opposite factions ; namely, the unionist or democratic party, which desired a republic, *one and indivisible ;* and the federalist party, or the men of the old aristocracy, who demanded the ancient institutions. The unionist party was engendered by the French revolution ; the other was that of the *ancien régime*, and it leant secretly towards Austria ; between these two factions the moderate or neutral party balanced. Abandoned to themselves, during the year 1802, the unionists and the federalists came to violent disputes, and civil war, by turns secretly encouraged by our minister Verninac, in conformity with the instructions of the cabinet of the Tuileries, the policy of which tended to a *dénouement* calculated with art, and on that account inevitable. The federalist party having got the upper hand, the unionists threw themselves into the arms of France. This was what the first consul expected. He suddenly called his aide-de-

camp Rapp to make his appearance, as the bearer of a proclamation, in which he spoke in the tone of a master rather than a mediator, ordering all the parties to lay down their arms, and causing a military occupation of Switzerland by a *corps a'armée* under the orders of General Ney. In yielding to force, the last federative diet yielded none of its rights. On that account, the confederated cantons were treated as conquered countries ; and Bonaparte was seen to proceed to his task of mediator as if he were going to a conquest which had been the prize of his valour. In this manner the last efforts of the Swiss, to recover their ancient laws and government, became abortive.

The delegates of the two parties had their rendezvous at Paris, in order to implore the powerful interposition of the mediator. Thirty-six deputies of the unionists proceeded there. The federalists were more dilatory, so much repugnance had they to a proceeding which they regarded as a humiliation ; their delegates nevertheless arrived, to the number of fifteen, and the whole were assembled at Paris in the month of December. It was then that the first consul nominated the commission charged with the function of conferring with them, and maturing such an act of mediation as should terminate the troubles of Switzerland. This commission, over which the senator Barthélemi presided, was composed of two senators, the president and myself, and of the two councillors of state, Rœderer and Demeunier. The choice of the president could not have been more happy. As well as the senator Barthélemi, I was assailed by the worthy Swiss, who resorted to us as if we composed an areopagus. It was in vain that I told them that all ulterior decision would depend on the will of the first consul, of which we were only the reporters ; they persisted in attributing to me, in particular, a great influence ; my closet and my *salon* were constantly crowded.

The conferences opened ; and in the first sitting, held on the 10th of December, our president read to the delegates a

letter, in which the first consul disclosed to them his intention. "Nature," said he, "has made your state federative; the attempt to vanquish it would not be wise." This oracle was a thunderbolt for the unionist party; it was quite upset by it. However, to moderate the triumph of the federalists, who already conceived that the ancient order of things was about to revive, the consular letter added:—"A renunciation of all privileges is your primary want, and your first duty." Thus there was an end to the ancient aristocracy. The close of the letter contained the express declaration, that France and the Italian republic would never permit the establishment in Switzerland of a system tending to favour the interests of the enemies of Italy and France.

I immediately proposed that the consulta should nominate a commission of five members, with whom the consular commission and the first consul himself might confer. The next day, 12th of December, Bonaparte had a conference, in our presence, with the committee of the consulta, in which his intentions were more clearly expressed. A third party immediately formed itself, which concluded by supplanting the unionists and the federalists, whom we had determined to neutralize. A very strong opposition of views and interests gave place to very animated discussions, which, sometimes interrupted and sometimes resumed, were protracted till the 24th of January, 1803. That day, the first consul put a stop to them, in causing the consulta to be called upon to name commissioners who should receive from his hand the act of mediation which he had just completed (in conformity with our reports and views), an act on which they would be permitted to offer their opinions. Convoked to a new conference which lasted nearly eight hours, the Swiss commissioners obtained different modifications in the project of the constitution; and, on the 19th of February, received from the hand of the first consul, in a solemn sitting, the *act of mediation* which was to govern their country. This act imposed a new federative compact on Switzerland;

and, moreover, decided the particular constitution of each canton. The next morning, the consulta having been dismissed, the consular commission, of which I composed a part, closed its sittings and its *procès-verbaux*.

Thus finished the interference of the French government with the internal affairs of Switzerland. It would be difficult, I imagine, to conceive a transitory régime more conformable with the real wants of its inhabitants. Never besides did Bonaparte less abuse his vast preponderance; and Switzerland is, without contradiction, of all states near or distant, over which he has exerted his influence, that which he has spared the most during the fifteen years of his ascendency and glory. In order to pay a proper tribute to truth, I will add, that the act of mediation in Switzerland was impregnated, as much as possible, with the conciliatory and characteristically moderate spirit of my colleague Barthélemi; and I dare affirm, on my side, that I seconded his views to the utmost of my capacity and power. I had, on this subject, many particular conferences with the first consul.

But how little did his conduct, with reference to the rest of Europe, resemble his moderate policy towards our neighbours the Swiss.

Everything had also been matured, in order to strike a powerful blow at the Germanic confederation, the demolition of which was about to be set on foot. The affair of the indemnities to be given to those of the members of the Germanic body, who either entirely, or in part, had been deprived of their estates and possessions, as well by various cessions as by the reunion of the left bank of the Rhine to France, had been referred to an extraordinary deputation of the empire. The extraordinary commission was opened at Ratisbon, in the summer of 1801, under the mediation of France and Russia. Its operations awakened all our intriguers in diplomacy; they composed a gold-mine of it, which they worked with an audacity, which, at first, revolted

the chief magistrate, but which he could not repress, in consequence of the great number of high personages connected with it. He was, besides, naturally indulgent to all exactions which pressed upon foreign nations. In this important affair, our influence predominated over the Russian. The extraordinary commission did not give in its report, after its forty-sixth sitting, till the 23rd of February, 1803, at the very epoch when the Swiss mediation terminated. People may judge of the activity of intrigues, and the disgraceful bargains which were struck during this long interval, especially when things were drawing to a conclusion. When complaints arrived, or great rogueries were divulged, everything was laid to the manœuvres of the public offices, where, they said, none but go-betweens were employed, when, to speak the truth, everything came from certain great men's cabinets, or ladies' *boudoirs*, where indemnities and principalities were sold and purchased. Although I was no longer in office, it was always to me that complaints and disclosures, with regard to denials of justice, were transmitted; it was obstinately concluded that I still retained my influence, and the ear of the master.

But it was not on the side of Germany, already fallen into obvious decay, that the tempest, which was about to bring back upon us the scourges of war and revolutions, matured its elements; it was beyond the straits of Calais. What I had foreseen was realized by a series of irresistible causes. The enthusiasm which the peace of Amiens had excited in England was not of long duration. The English cabinet, on its guard, and placing little reliance on the sincerity of the first consul, delayed, under certain pretexts, to give up its possession of the Cape of Good Hope, Malta, and Alexandria in Egypt. But this only referred to political relations; Bonaparte thought less of that than of the maintenance of his personal authority, which, in the English papers, continued to be attacked with a virulence to which he could not become accustomed. His police was then so feeble, that

he was soon seen to struggle without dignity, and without success, against the press and the intrigues of the English. To every memorial presented against the invectives of the London Journalists, the ministers of Great Britain replied, that it was one consequence of the liberty of the press; that they themselves were exposed to it; and that there was no recourse against such an abuse but the law. Blinded by his anger, and ill-advised, the first consul fell into the snare; he committed himself with the pamphleteer Peltier;[1] who was only sentenced to a fine, in order to triumph with more effect over his adversary. A rich subscription, instantly set on foot by the most influential classes in England, put him in a condition to carry on a paper war against Bonaparte, before which the *Moniteur* and the *Argus* turned pale.

Thence the resentment which Bonaparte felt against England. "Every wind which blows," said he, "from that direction, brings nothing but contempt and hatred against my person." From that time he concluded that the peace could not benefit him; that it would not leave him sufficient facility to aggrandize his dominion externally, and would impede the extension of his internal power; that, moreover, our daily relations with England modified our political ideas and revived our thoughts of liberty. From that moment he resolved to deprive us of all connection with a free people. The grossest invectives against the government and institutions of England soiled our public journals, which assumed a surly and violent character. Having no longer a high police, nor the means of forming a public spirit, the first consul had recourse to the artifices of his minister for foreign affairs, in order to deceive the French, and thus to make them adopt erroneous opinions. Heavy clouds now obscured the peace, which had become problematical, but to which Bonaparte still clung involuntarily through a kind of inward presentiment of fatal catastrophes.

[1] Author of the "Ambigu," and a multitude of very witty pamphlets against Bonaparte and his family.

Beyond the Channel, everything was becoming hostile, and the complaints against the first consul were explicitly expressed. He was reproached with the incorporation of Piedmont, and the Isle of Elba ; he was accused of having disposed of Tuscany and kept Parma ; of having imposed new laws on the Ligurian and Helvetian republics ; of having united in his own person the government of the Italian republic ; of treating Holland like a French province ; of collecting considerable forces on the shores of Brittany, under pretext of a new expedition to Saint Domingo ; of having stationed at the mouth of the Maes another corps, the importance of which was quite out of proportion with its avowed object, that of taking possession of Louisiana ; in conclusion, of having sent officers of artillery and engineers, in the guise of commercial agents, to explore the harbours and ship-roads of Great Britain, in order, in this manner, to prepare, in the midst of peace, for a clandestine invasion of the shores of England.

The only complaint which the first consul could adduce against the English, was limited to their refusal to give up Malta. But they replied, that political changes, effected since the treaty of Amiens, rendered that restitution impossible, without some preliminary arrangements.

It is certain that sufficient circumspection was not employed in the political operations directed against England. If Bonaparte had wished for the maintenance of peace, he would sedulously have avoided giving umbrage and inquietude to that power, with regard to its Indian possessions, and would have abstained from applauding the rhodomontades about the mission of Sébastiani into Syria and Turkey. His imprudent conversation with Lord Whitworth accelerated the rupture. I foresaw from that time that he would quickly pass from a certain degree of moderation as chief of the government, to acts of exaggeration, violence, and even rage.

Such was his decree of the 22nd of May, 1803, ordering

the arrest of all Englishmen who were on business, or on their travels in France. There had never been, till then, an example of such a violence against the rights of nations. How could M. de Talleyrand lend himself to become the principal instrument of so outrageous an act—he, who had always given express assurance to the English residing in Paris, that they would, after the departure of their ambassador, enjoy the protection of the government, to as great an extent as during his stay? If he had had the courage to resign, what would have become of Napoleon without a high police, and without a minister capable of counterpoising the politics of Europe. But how many other complaints could we make; how many other accusations on the subject of more monstrous co-operations! I thought myself lucky at that time to be no longer in office. Who knows? I, also, might have yielded, like another; but at all events I should have recorded my resistance, and made a protest of my disapprobation.

Without more delay, Bonaparte took possession of the electorate of Hanover, and ordered the blockade of the Elbe and Weser. All his thoughts were directed towards the execution of his great project for invading the enemy's shores. The beach of Ostend, Dunkirk, and Boulogne, were covered with camps; squadrons at Toulon, Rochfort, and Brest, were fitted out; our docks were crowded with pinnaces, praams, boats, and gunboats. England, on her side, took her measures of defence; the force of her navy was raised to four hundred and sixty-nine ships of war, and a flotilla of eight hundred vessels guarded her coasts; all her national population rushed to arms; camps were erected on the heights of Dover, and in the counties of Sussex and Kent; the two armies were only separated by the channel, and the enemy's flotilla came and insulted ours, under the protection of a coast lined with cannon.

In this manner formidable preparations, on both sides, indicated the revival of the maritime contest, which was a

prelude, more or less proximate, of a universal war. A more serious political motive had accelerated the rupture on the part of England. The cabinet of London had early notice that Bonaparte was preparing, in the silence of his cabinet, all the necessary steps for getting himself declared emperor, and for reviving the empire of Charlemagne. Ever since my retreat from public affairs, the first consul was persuaded that the opposition which he would experience to his coronation would be very feeble, republican ideas having fallen into discredit. All the reports that came from Paris agreed on this point, that he would soon bound his head with the diadem of kings. That which particularly awakened the notice of the cabinet of London, was the proposal made to the house of Bourbon, to transfer to the first consul their rights to the throne of France. Not daring to make the proposal directly himself, he availed himself, for the purpose, of the negotiation of the Prussian cabinet, which he moulded as he pleased. The minister Haugwitz employed M. de Meyer, president of the regency of Warsaw, who offered to Louis XVIII. indemnities in Italy, and a magnificent establishment. But nobly inspired, the king made this well-known admirable reply. "I know not what may be the designs of God respecting my family and myself; but I know the obligations which He has imposed upon me by the rank to which He has pleased to call me. As a Christian, I will fulfil these obligations to my last breath; as a son of St. Louis, I shall, from his example, know how to respect myself, even in chains; as a successor of Francis I., I wish to be able to say with him, 'We have lost everything but our honour.'" All the French princes concurred with this noble declaration. I have expatiated on this fact, because it serves to explain what I have to say on the subject of the conspiracy of Georges and Moreau, and of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien.

The ill success of the overture to the princes having retarded the development of Bonaparte's plan, the rest of

the year, 1803, passed in expectation. They affected to be exclusively engaged with preparations for invasion. But a double danger appeared imminent at London ; and there the conspiracy of Georges Cadoudal was devised, upon the sole foundation of discontent in Moreau, who was known to be in opposition to Bonaparte. They thought of nothing less but of bringing the two extreme parties together, and forming a coalition between them, that is, the armed royalists on the one hand, and the independent patriots on the other. But to cement such an alliance was beyond the power of the agents who interfered in it. Intriguers could only arrive at a false result. The discovery of one branch of the conspiracy rendered the whole abortive. When Réal had received the first disclosures of Querelle, who was sentenced to death, and had given an account of them, the first consul, in the first instance, refused to give them credit. I was consulted, and I perceived traces of a plot which it was necessary to penetrate and follow. I could, from that moment, have caused the re-establishment of the police administration, and resumed the reins of it myself, but I took care not to do so, and eluded it ; as yet I saw nothing clear in the horizon. I readily admitted, that the *gros-juge* was incapable of detecting and transacting an affair of so much moment, but I cried up Desmarets, head of the secret division, and Réal, councillor of state, as two excellent ferrets, and well-trained explorers ; I said, that Réal having had the good fortune to make the discovery, the confidential charge of accomplishing his work ought to be given to him. He was put at the head of an extraordinary commission, with *carte blanche*, and he was permitted to call in the aid of the military power—Murat having been appointed governor of Paris. Proceeding from discovery to discovery, Pichegru was next arrested ; and afterwards Moreau and Georges. Bonaparte saw in the nature of this conspiracy, and especially in the implication of Moreau, a stroke of fortune, which secured to him possession of the empire ; he thought that it

would be sufficient to characterize Moreau as a conspirator, in order to denationalize him. This mistake, and the assassination of the Duke d'Enghien, very nearly caused his ruin.

I was one of the first who obtained a knowledge of the mission of Caulaincourt and Ordener to the banks of the Rhine; but when I was informed that the telegraph had just announced the arrest of the prince, and that the order to transfer him from Strasbourg to Paris was given, I foresaw the catastrophe, and I trembled for the life of the noble victim. I hurried to Malmaison, where the first consul then was; it was on the 29th Ventôse (20th March, 1804). I arrived there at nine o'clock in the morning, and I found him in a state of agitation, walking by himself in the park. I entreated permission to say a word to him about the great event of the day. "I see," said he, "what brings you; I am about this day to strike a great and necessary blow." I represented to him that France and Europe would rise against him, if he did not supply undeniable proof that the duke had conspired against his person at Etteinheim. "What necessity is there for proof?" he exclaimed; "is he not a Bourbon, and the most dangerous of all of them?" I persisted in offering arguments of policy calculated to silence the reasons of state. But all in vain; he concluded by impatiently telling me, "Have not you and your friends told me a thousand times that I should conclude by becoming the Monk of France, and by restoring the Bourbons? Very well! there will no longer be any way of retreating. What stronger guarantee can I give to the revolution, which you have cemented by the blood of a king? It is, besides, indispensable to bring things to a conclusion; I am surrounded by plots; I must imprint terror or perish." In saying these last words, which left nothing more to hope, he had approached the castle; I saw M. de Talleyrand arrive, and a moment after the two consuls, Cambacérès and Lebrun. I regained my carriage, and returned home in a state of consternation.

The next day I learned, that after my departure a council had been held, and that Savary had proceeded, at night, to the execution of the unfortunate victim ; atrocious circumstances were quoted. Savary had revenged himself, it was reported, for having missed his prey in Normandy, where he had flattered himself with having ensnared, by means of the threads he held of the conspiracy of Georges, the Duke de Berri and the Count d'Artois, whom he would have more willingly sacrificed than the Duke d'Enghien.[1] Réal assured me that he expected so little this nocturnal execution, that he had departed, in the morning, to go to the prince at Vincennes, expecting to bring him to Malmaison, in the hope that the first consul would finish the affair in a magnanimous manner. But a *coup d'état* appeared indispensable to impress Europe with terror, and eradicate all the germs of conspiracy against his person.

Indignation, as I had foreseen, broke out in the most bitter manner. I was not the person who hesitated to express himself with the least restraint, respecting this violence against the rights of nations and humanity. "It is more than a crime," I said, "it is a political fault ;" words which I record, because they have been repeated and attributed to others.

The trial of Moreau created a momentary diversion, but by giving birth to a danger more real, in consequence of the public excitement and indignation. Moreau appeared to the eyes of all as a victim to the jealousy and ambition of Bonaparte. The general tendency of the public mind gave reason for fearing that his condemnation would induce an insurrection and defection of the army. His cause became that of the greater part of the generals. Lecourbe, Dessoles, Mac-

[1] Without seeking to exonerate the Duke de Rovigo, who has so inefficiently justified himself from participation in the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, we will just observe that Fouché labours here under a little suspicion of partiality ; he did not like M. de Rovigo, who was invested subsequently with his post as minister of police.—*Note of the French Editor.*

donald, Massena, and several others, spoke out with a menacing fidelity and energy. Monsey declared that he could not even answer for the *gendarmerie*. A great crisis was at hand, and Bonaparte remained shut up in the Castle of St. Cloud, as if it were a fortress. I presented myself to him, two days after having addressed him in writing, in order to point out the abyss which yawned at his feet. He affected a firmness, which, at the bottom of his heart, he did not possess.

"I am not of opinion," said I to him, "that Moreau should be sacrificed, and I do not approve of violent measures in this case at all; it is necessary to temporize, for violence has too great an affinity to weakness, and an act of clemency on your part will produce a stronger effect than scaffolds."

Having lent an attentive ear to my exposition of the danger of his situation, he promised me to pardon Moreau, by commuting the pain of death into a simple exile. Was he sincere? I knew that Moreau was urged to escape from the hands of justice, by making an appeal to the soldiers, whose dispositions in his favour were exaggerated. But better counsels and his own instinct prevailed, so as to retain him within just bounds. All the efforts of Bonaparte, and of his partisans, to get Moreau condemned to death, failed. The issue of the trial having disconcerted the first consul, he sent for me to St. Cloud, and there I was commanded to take upon myself the direct management of this delicate affair, and bring about a peaceable issue. I, in the first instance, saw the wife of Moreau, and exerted myself to appease her acute and vivid feelings of resentment. I afterwards saw Moreau, and it was easy for me to get him to consent to his ostracism, by pointing out to him the perspective of the danger arising from a detention of two years, which would place him, in a manner, in the power of his enemy. To say the truth, there was as much danger for one as the other; Moreau might be assassinated or liberated. He followed my

advice, and took the road to Cadiz, in order to pass from thence into the United States. The next day I was received and thanked at St. Cloud, in terms which gave me reason to presage the approaching return of very brilliant favour.

I had also given to Bonaparte advice to make himself master of the crisis, and cause himself to be proclaimed Emperor, in order to terminate all our uncertainties, by the foundation of his dynasty. I knew that his resolution was taken. Would it not have been absurd, on the part of the men of the revolution, to compromise everything, in order to defend our principles, while we had nothing further to do but enjoy the reality? Bonaparte was then the only man in a position to maintain us in the possession of our property, our distinctions, and our employments. He profited of all his advantages, and even before the *dénouement* of the affair of Moreau, a tribune, who had been previously instructed, made a motion to confer the title of Emperor, and the imperial hereditary power, upon Napoleon Bonaparte, and to bring into the organization of the constituted authorities the modifications which the establishment of the empire might require, with the proviso of preserving in their integrity the equality, the liberty, and the rights of the people.

The members of the legislative body assembled, with M. de Fontanes at their head, in order to give in their adhesion to the vote of the Tribunat. On the 16th of May, three orators of the council of state having carried a project of a *senatus consultum* to the senate, the report was sent to a commission, and adopted on the same day. It was thus Napoleon himself, who, in virtue of the initiative conferred upon him, proposed to the senate his promotion to the imperial dignity. The senate, of which I composed a part, went in a body to St. Cloud, and the *senatus consultum* was proclaimed at the very moment by Napoleon in person. He pledged himself, within the two years which would follow his accession, to take an oath, in the presence of the great officers of the empire, and his ministers, to respect, and cause

to be respected, the equality of our rights, political and civil liberty, the irrevocability of the national property; and not to raise any impost, nor establish any tax, except by virtue of the law.—Whose fault was it that the empire, from its establishment, was not a real constitutional monarchy? I do not pretend to set myself against the public body, of which I composed a part at that period; but I found, at that time, very few materials for a national opposition.

The title of Emperor and the imperial power were hereditary in the family of Bonaparte from male to male, and by order of primogeniture. Having no issue male, Napoleon might adopt the children or grand-children of his brothers; and in that case, his adopted sons were to enter into the line of direct descent.

This arrangement had an object, which could not escape the attention of whomsoever was acquainted with the domestic situation of Napoleon. It was singular; and it would require the pen of a Suetonius to describe it. I will not make the attempt; but it is necessary, however, to touch upon it for the sake of the truth and utility of history.

For a long time Napoleon had been convinced, notwithstanding the artifices of Joséphine, that she would never give him any progeny. This situation was calculated sooner or later to tire the patience of a founder of a great empire, in all the vigour of his age. Joséphine, therefore, found herself between two rocks—infidelity and divorce. Her anxieties and alarms had increased since his accession to the consulship for life, which she knew was only a stepping-stone to the empire. In the interim, mortified by her sterility, she conceived a plan for substituting her daughter Hortense in the affection of her husband, who already, in a sensual point of view, was escaping from her, and who, in the hope of seeing himself born again in a son, might break the knot which united him to her; it would not have been without pain. On one side, habit; on the other, the amiable temper of

Joséphine, and a kind of superstition, seemed to secure to her for ever the attachment, or at least the attentions, of Napoleon; but great causes for inquietude and anxiety did nevertheless exist. The preservative naturally presented itself to the mind of Joséphine; she found even little difficulty in the execution of her plan.

Hortense, when young, had felt a great dislike to the husband of her mother; she, indeed, detested him: but by degrees, time, age, and the halo of glory which surrounded Napoleon, and his attentions to Joséphine, induced Hortense to pass from the extreme of antipathy to adoration. Without being handsome, she was witty, lively, replete with graces and talents. She pleased; and the inclination became so warm on both sides, that it was sufficient for Joséphine to affect the air of being maternally pleased, and afterwards, to shut her eyes upon the matter, in order to secure her domestic triumph. The mother and daughter reigned at the same time in the heart of this haughty man. When, according to the mother's views, the tree began to bear fruit, it was necessary to think of masking, by a sudden marriage, an intrigue which already began to reveal itself to the eyes of the courtiers. Hortense would have willingly given her hand to Duroc; but Napoleon, looking to the future, and calculating from that time the possibility of an adoption, wished to concentrate in his own family, by a double incest, the intrigue to which he was about to be indebted for all the charms of paternity. Thence the union of his brother Louis and Hortense—a melancholy union, and which ended in rending the veil.

Meantime, the wishes of all parties, with the exception of those of the new husband, were, at first, auspiciously fulfilled. Hortense gave birth to a son, who took the name of Napoleon, and on whom Napoleon lavished marks of tenderness of which he was not believed susceptible. This child, in growing, became more and more charming, and, by its features alone, doubly interested Napoleon at the period of his acces-

sion to the empire. No doubt he designed him from that time, in his heart, as his adopted son.

His elevation to the imperial dignity met, from all quarters, with the most chilling reception; there were public *fêtes* without animation and without joy.

Napoleon had not waited for the formality of the sanction of the people, to hear himself saluted with the name of Emperor, and to receive the oaths of the senate, which was now become nothing but the passive instrument of his will. It was in the army alone that he wished to strike deeply the roots of his government; and, accordingly, he hastened to confer the dignity of marshal of the empire, either on those of his generals who were most devoted to him, or on those who had been opposed to him, but whom it would have been impolitic to exclude. By the side of the names of Berthier, Murat, Lannes, Bessières, Davoust, Soult, Lefèvre, on whom he could most depend, were seen the names of Jourdan, Masséna, Bernadotte, Ney, Brune, and Augereau, more republican than monarchical. As to Pérignon, Serrurier, Kellermann, and Mortier, they were only there in order to make weight, and to complete the eighteen columns of the empire, whose selection was ratified by public opinion.

There was more difficulty in getting up a court, in re-establishing *levers* and *couchers*, special presentations; and to create an imperial household of persons elevated by the revolution, and of others selected from the old families whom it had despoiled. It was quite right to employ nobles and emigrants; the affairs of the household were naturally devolved on them. A little ridicule at first attached itself to these metamorphoses, but the world soon got familiarized with the change.

It was very obvious, however, that everything was constrained and forced, and that there was more skill employed in organizing the military government. The civil government was as yet no more than a sketch. The elevation of Cambacérès and Lebrun, the first to the arch-chancellorship,

the second to the rank of arch-treasurer, adding nothing to the counterpoise of the public councils. The institution of a council of state, as an integral part, and superior authority in the constitution, had more the appearance of being a means of centralization, rather than of the elaboration of discussions. Among the ministers, M. de Talleyrand was the only one who appeared capable of exercising the influence of perspicuity ; but that was only with regard to foreign relations. With regard to the interior, an important spring was wanted, that of the general police, which might have rallied the past round the present, and guaranteed the security of the empire. Napoleon himself perceived the void, and, by an imperial decree of the 10th July, re-established me at the head of the police ; at the same time investing me with stronger functions than those which I had possessed, before the absurd fusion of the police with the department of justice.

Here I feel I must hasten the march of my narrative ; for there still remains for me the task of passing over a lapse of six years, fertile in memorable events. The ground is immense, and that is an additional reason to set aside all that is unworthy of history, in order to point out or disclose only those things which are worthy of its pen ; but nothing essential shall be omitted.

Two days before the decree of my re-appointment, I had been sent for to St. Cloud, in order to have a private interview with Napoleon. On that occasion, I obtained, if I may so express myself, my own conditions, in causing the basis which completed the new organization of my ministry to be invested with the imperial sanction.

Réal had aspired to the post, as a recompense for his zeal in tracing the conspiracy of Georges ; but, though a skilful explorer, and a good *chef-de-division*, his powers were by no means sufficient to give motion to such a machine. But, if he did not get the post, he was amply recompensed in cash down, to the charms of which he was not insensible ; and

he was, besides, one of the four councillors of state who were united with me in the administrative department, in order to correspond with the departmental prefects. The three other councillors were Pelet *de la Lozère*, a creature of Cambacérès'; Miot, a creature of Joseph Bonaparte's; and Dubois, prefect of police. These four councillors met once a week in my closet, to give me an account of all the affairs appertaining to their functions, and take my opinion. I, by that means, got rid myself of a multitude of tedious details, reserving to my own exertions the management of the high police; the secret division of which had remained under the direction of Desmarets, an individual of a supple and crafty character, but without foresight. It was to the central focus of my cabinet that all the great affairs of state, of which I held the strings, finally converged. It will not be doubted that I had salaried spies in all ranks and orders; I had some of both sexes, hired at the rate of a thousand or two thousand francs per month, according to their importance and their services. I received their reports directly in writing, having a conventional mark. Every three months, I communicated my list to the emperor, in order that there might be no double employment; and also in order that the nature of the service, occasionally permanent, often temporary, might be rewarded either by places or remunerations.

As to the government's police abroad, it had two essential objects, namely, to watch friendly powers, and counteract hostile governments. In both cases, it was composed of individuals purchased or pensioned, and commissioned to reside near each government, or in each principal town, independent of numerous secret agents sent into all countries, either by the minister of foreign affairs, or by the emperor himself.

I also had my foreign spies. It was in my cabinet, also, that the foreign gazettes, prohibited to the perusal of the French people, were collected, abstracts of which were made for my own use. By that means, I held in my hands the

most important strings of foreign politics; and I discharged, in conjunction with the chief of the government, a task capable of controlling or balancing that of the minister charged with foreign relations.

I was thus far from limiting my duties to *espionnage*. All the state prisons were under my control, as well as the *gendarmerie*. The delivery of the *visa* of passports belonged to me. To me was assigned the duty of watching amnestied individuals and foreigners. I established general commissariats in the principal towns of the kingdom, which extended the net-work of the police over the whole of France, and especially our frontiers.

My police acquired so high a renown, that the world went so far as to pretend that I had, among my secret agents, three nobles of the *ancien régime*, distinguished by princely titles,[1] and who daily communicated to me the result of their observations.

I confess that such an establishment was expensive; it swallowed up several millions, the funds of which were secretly provided from taxes laid upon gambling and prostitution, and from the granting of passports. Notwithstanding all that has been said against gambling, reflecting and firm minds must allow, that in the actual state of society, the legal converting of vice into profit is a necessary evil. A proof that all the odium attendant upon the measure is not to be attributed exclusively to the republican governments, is, that at the present day, gambling taxes form part of the budget of the old government now re-established. Since it was an unavoidable evil, it became necessary to have recourse to strict regulations, that the disorder might at least be under control. Under the empire, the establishment of which cost nearly four hundred million of francs (£16,000,000), since there were thirty families who, having become magistrates and highnesses,

[1] The Prince de L*********, the Prince de C****, and the Prince de M****.

were to be provided with proper means, it became nec
to organize the gambling-houses upon a much larger
for the produce of them was not solely destined to reward my moving phalanxes of spies. I nominated as superintendent-general of the gambling-houses in France, Perrein the elder, who already farmed them, and who, after the coronation, extended his privilege over all the chief towns of the empire, upon condition of paying fourteen millions yearly, independent of three thousand francs daily to the minister of the police, which, however, did not remain entirely in his hands.

All these elements of an immense power did not reach my cabinet, there to expire without utility. As I was informed of all, it became my duty to centre in myself the public complaints, in order to make known to the head of the government the discomforts and sufferings of the state.

I will not therefore dissemble, that it was in my power to act upon the fear or terror which either more or less constantly agitated the possessor of an unlimited power. The great searcher into the state, I could complain, censure, and condemn, for the whole of France. In this point of view, what evils have I not prevented! If I found myself unable to reduce, as was my wish, the general police to a mere scarecrow, or rather to a benevolent institution, I have at least the satisfaction of being able to assert that I have done more good than evil; that is to say, that I have avoided more evil than was permitted me to do good, having almost always to struggle with the prejudices, the passions, and the furious transports of the chief of the state.

In my second ministry, I succeeded much more by the force of remonstrances and of apprehension, than by restraint and the use of coercive measures. I revived the ancient police maxim, namely, that three persons could not meet and speak indiscreetly upon public affairs, without its coming the next day to the ears of the minister of police. Certain it is, that I had the address to make it universally believed

that wherever four persons assembled, there, in my pay, were eyes to see and ears to hear. Such a belief, no doubt, tended to general corruption and degradation; but, on the other hand, what evils, what wretchedness, what tears has it prevented? Such then was this vast and terrific machine called the general police of the empire. It may easily be conceived, that without neglecting the details, I was chiefly engaged with its *ensemble* and results.

The empire had just been hastily established under such fearful auspices, and the public spirit was so ill-disposed and hostile, that I considered it my duty to advise the emperor to make a diversion, to travel, for the purpose of removing these malevolent and slanderous dispositions against his person, his family, and his new court, more than ever exposed to the malicious taunts of the Parisians.

He acquiesced, and went first to Boulogne, where he caused himself, so to speak, to be raised on the shield by the troops encamped in the neighbourhood. From Boulogne he proceeded to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he received the ambassadors from several powers, who all, with the exception of England, Russia, and Sweden, hastened to acknowledge him.

Then passing rapidly through the united departments, and arriving at Mayence, he was visited there by a great number of the German princes; he returned to Saint Cloud about the end of autumn.

The political state of Europe required more management than rigidness. One act of passion and rage, on the part of the emperor, had nearly ruined all. He caused Sir George Rumbold, the English minister, to be arrested at Hamburg, by a detachment of soldiers; his papers were likewise seized, and himself brought to Paris, and committed to the Temple. This fresh violation of the rights of nations roused the whole of Europe. Both M. de Talleyrand and myself trembled lest the fate of the Duke d'Enghien should be in reserve for Sir George; and we did all in our power to

rescue him from a summary sentence. The papers of Sir George had fallen into my hands, and I carefully palliated all that might have been the subject of a serious charge. The interference of Prussia, whom we secretly urged, completed what we had so happily begun. Sir George Rumbold was liberated upon the condition of never again setting foot in Hamburg, and of henceforth keeping himself at a distance of fifty leagues from the French territory; conditions proposed by myself.

I could do nothing against sudden and unexpected resolves, and I had then no means left me of eluding or opposing those dark acts which, trampling upon the forms of justice, were exercised by a direct order emanating from the cabinet, and committed to subalterns over whom I had no official control. I was myself more or less exposed to the malevolence of the prefect of police. At the time of the first affair of General Mallet, he accused me, to the emperor, of being desirous of secretly protecting Mallet, of having given Masséna a hint of the accusations which were hanging over him, and of having suppressed papers which implicated him. Plots were talked of, which had their ramifications in the army and in the high police. I satisfied the emperor that the whole amounted to having put Masséna upon his guard against the insinuations of certain dangerous meddlers and intriguers.

Many important privy councils were held at Saint Cloud; their principal objects being to obtain the sanction of the pope's presence at the emperor's coronation, and to detach Russia from an alliance with England, which would have formed the nucleus of a third coalition, the germs of which we perceived in the political horizon.

The pope was the first to swallow the bait, so imperious appeared to him the interests of religion, and so striking in his eyes was the parallel of the present times with those of Léon and Etienne, of Pepin and Charlemagne. We knew that the king of Sweden, since the murder of the Duke

d'Enghien, was going about Germany trying to raise up enemies against us ; snares were laid for him at every step, and at Munich he narrowly escaped being carried off. Russia appeared to me to present greater difficulties. Russia had vainly offered her mediation for the maintenance of peace between France and Great Britain. The coolness which had arisen in consequence of this failure was, at the murder of the Duke d'Enghein, changed into an extreme indignation. On the 7th of May, the Russian minister had despatched a note to the diet of Ratisbon, by which the empire was requested to demand such reparations as the violation of its territory demanded. The cabinet of St. Petersburg had just satisfied itself of the falsehood of the assertions, according to which the Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia should have fully authorized the French government to cause to be seized, in Germany, the rebels who had deprived themselves of the protection of the law of nations. In short, the czar showed himself ill-disposed towards us, and inclined for war, which would have overthrown all the plans which the emperor meditated against Great Britain. To regain Russia, it was proposed to have recourse to the intrigues of courtiers and to the seductive influence of the fair sex ; this resource appeared to me perfectly ridiculous, and I affirmed in the council that its success was impossible. "What!" replied the emperor, "is it a veteran of the revolution who borrows so pusillanimous an expression! What, sir, is it for you to advance that anything is impossible—you who, during fifteen years, have seen brought to pass events which were with justice thought to be impossible? The man who has seen Louis XVI. place his neck under the guillotine ; who has seen the Archduchess of Austria, queen of France, mend her own stockings and shoes, while in the daily expectation of mounting the scaffold ; he, in short, who sees himself a minister when I am emperor of the French ; such a man should never permit the word *impossible* to escape his

lips!" I saw clearly that I owed this severe sally to my disapprobation of the murder of the Duke d'Enghein, of which they did not fail to inform the emperor, and I replied, without being disconcerted, "I, indeed, ought to have recollected that your majesty has taught us the word *impossible* is not French."

This he immediately proved to us in a most striking manner, by forcing the sovereign pontiff from his papal palace, during a winter of extreme severity, to anoint his head with the sacred unction. Pius VII. arrived at Fontainbleau on the 25th of November; and eight days after, on the eve of the coronation, the senate came to present the emperor with three millions five hundred thousand votes in favour of his elevation to the imperial power. In his speech, the vice-president, François de Neufchâteau, still spoke of the republic, which appeared pure derision. At the ceremony of the coronation (Napoleon himself placed the crown upon his head), the acclamations, at first extremely few, were afterwards reinforced by the multitude of men in office (*fonctionnaires*) who were summoned from all parts of France to be present at the coronation.

But upon returning to his palace, Napoleon found cold and silent spectators, as when he visited the metropolis. Both in my reports and my private conferences, I pointed out to him how much he still stood in need of friends in the capital, and how essential it was to bury in oblivion the actions imputed to him.

We soon perceived he meditated a great diversion. When he mentioned in council his idea of going to be crowned king of Italy, we all told him he would provoke a new continental war. "I must have battles and triumphs," replied he. And yet he did not relax his preparations for the invasion of England. One day, upon my objecting to him that he could not make war at the same time against England and against all Europe, he replied, "I may fail by sea, but not by land; besides, I shall be able to strike the

blow before the old coalition machines are ready. The people of the old school (*têtes à perruque*) understand nothing about it, and the kings have neither activity nor decision of character. I do not fear old Europe."

His coronation at Milan was the repetition of his coronation in France. In order to show himself to his new subjects, he traversed his kingdom of Italy. Upon seeing the magnificent city of Genoa and its picturesque environs, he exclaimed: "This is, indeed, worth a war." His conduct throughout was admirable; he paid particular attention to the Piedmontese, especially to their nobility, for whom he had a decided predilection.

Upon his return to the coast of Boulogne, redoubling his preparations, he kept his army ready to cross the strait. But success was so dependent upon the execution of so vast a plan, that it was scarcely possible for it not to be deranged, either by circumstances or unforeseen chances. To make the French fleets, composed of vessels of the line, assist in the disembarkation of the army was no easy task. It was under the protection of fifty men of war, which, having sailed from Brest, Rochfort, L'Orient, Toulon, and Cadiz, were to rendezvous at Martinique, and thence make sail with all expedition for Boulogne, that the disembarkation of a hundred and forty thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry was to be effected. The landing once accomplished, the taking of London appeared certain. Napoleon was persuaded that, master of that capital, and the English army beaten and dispersed, he should be able to raise in London itself a popular party which would overthrow the oligarchy and destroy the government. All our secret information showed the feasibility of it. But, alas! he lost himself in his maritime plans, thinking that he could move our naval squadrons with the same precision as that with which his armies manœuvred before him.

On the other hand, neither he nor his minister of marine, Decrès, who enjoyed his utmost confidence, knew how to

form, or where to find, a naval officer intrepid enough to conduct so prodigious an operation. Decrès persuaded himself that Admiral Villeneuve, his friend, was adequate to the task : and he was the cause of the fatal event which completed the ruin of our navy. Nothing less was required of Villeneuve than to unite to his twenty vessels the squadrons of Ferrol and Vigo, in order to raise the blockade of Brest ; there, joining his own fleet with that of Gantheaume, amounting to twenty-one vesssels, making a total of sixty-three French and Spanish vessels, he was to sail for Boulogne, according to his instructions.

When it was known that he had just re-entered Cadiz, instead of accomplishing his glorious mission, the emperor was highly exasperated at the disappointment for several days ; no longer master of himself, he ordered the minister to have Villeneuve called before a council of inquiry, and nominated Rosily as his successor ; he afterwards wished to embark the army on board the flotilla, in spite of the opposition of Bruix ; illtreating this brave admiral so grossly, as to oblige him to place his hand upon his sword—a lamentable scene—which caused the disgrace of Bruix, and no longer left any hope of the enterprise.

It might however be said, that Fortune, while she prevented Napoleon from triumphing upon an element which was hostile to him, prepared still greater triumphs for him on the continent, by opening an immense career of glory for him, and of humiliation for Europe. It was chiefly in the dilatoriness and blunders of the different cabinets that he found his greatest strength.

None of the warnings of his diplomatic agents, nor any efforts of mine, had, as yet, been able to make him give up his fixed resolutions against England. He, however, knew that since the month of January, 1804, the Austrian minister, Count Stadion, had endeavoured to arouse the demon of coalitions, in a memorial addressed to the cabinet of London, a copy of which had been procured. Napoleon also

was not ignorant that Pitt had immediately instructed the English legation in Russia to sound the cabinet of St. Petersburg on it, who, since the affair of the German secularizations, was upon cool terms with France. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien kindled the fire which had hitherto smouldered under the ashes. To the note of the Russian minister at Ratisbon, Napoleon had replied by an insulting one, addressed to the *charge d'affaires* D'Oubril, recalling the tragical death of a father to the sensibility of his august son—D'Oubril was censured by his court for having received it. I had just been recalled into the ministry, when the note in answer arrived from the Russian government; it required the evacuation of the Kingdom of Naples, an indemnity to the King of Sardinia, and the evacuation of the North of Germany. "This," said I to the emperor, "is equivalent to a declaration of war." "No," replied he, "not yet; they mean nothing by it; that madman, the King of Sweden, is the only one who is really in understanding with England against me; besides, they can do nothing without Austria; and you know that at Vienna I have a party which outweighs the English one." "But are you not apprehensive," said I to him, "that this party may slip through your fingers?" "With God's help, and that of my armies," replied he, "I have no reason to fear any one!"—words which he afterwards took care to insert in the *Moniteur*.

Whether cabinet mystery concealed from us the subsequent transactions, or whether Napoleon studiously kept his ministers in the dark, it was not till the month of July that we were informed of the *traité de concert* signed at St. Petersburg on the 11th of April. The Archduke Charles had already resigned the helm of affairs at Vienna, and Austria began its preparations. This was well known, and yet the good understanding between France and her appeared unshaken. M. de Talleyrand strove hard to convince the Count de Cobentzel that the emperor's preponderance in Italy ought not to inspire any apprehensions.

Austria first offered herself as a mediatrix between the courts of St. Petersburg and Paris; but the emperor declined her interference. Informed, however, that military preparations were in great activity at Vienna, he caused it to be signified to that court, on the 15th of August, that he considered them as forming a diversion in favour of Great Britain, which would oblige him to defer the execution of his plans against that country, and he insisted that Austria should reduce its troops to the peace establishment.

The court of Vienna, finding further dissimulation impractible, published, on the 18th, an order, which, on the contrary, placed its troops on a war footing. By its note of the 13th of September, it developed a succession of complaints upon the inroads upon existing treaties, and upon the dependence of the Italian, Swiss, and Batavian republics, and particularly objected to the uniting the sovereignty of Italy and of France in the person of Napoleon. All these communications were shrouded with the veil of a secret diplomacy; and the public, who had been solely occupied with the projected invasion of England, saw, with astonishment, in the *Moniteur* of the 21st of September, the announcement of the invasion of Bavaria by Austria, without any rupture or previous declaration of war.

What a fortunate diversion for the French Emperor! It saved his maritime honour, and probably preserved him from a disaster which would have destroyed both himself and his nascent empire. The army hastened to abandon the Boulogne coast. It was a magnificent one, and felt the highest enthusiasm at quitting a state of irksome inaction, to march on towards the Rhine.

The European league had for its object the uniting against France five, or, at least, four hundred thousand men; namely, two hundred and fifty thousand Austrians, one hundred and fifteen thousand Russians, and thirty-five thousand British. It was with these united forces that the allied cabinets flattered themselves they should be able to

obtain the evacuation of Hanover and the north of Germany, the independence of Holland and Switzerland, the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia, and the evacuation of Italy. But the real object was, the destruction of the new empire before it had attained all its vigour.

It must be owned that Napoleon did not think himself justified in resting his sole dependence upon his excellent troops. He recollected the saying of Machiavel: that a prudent prince must be both a fox and a lion at the same time.[1] After having well studied his new field of battle (for it was the first time he made war in Germany), he told us that we should soon see that the campaigns of Moreau were nothing in comparison with his. In fact, he acted admirably in order to derange Mack's plans, who permitted himself to be petrified in his permission of Ulm. All the emperor's spies were more easily purchased than may be conceived, the greater part having already been gained over in Italy, where they in no small degree contributed to the disasters of Alvenzi and Wurmser. Here everything was effected upon a larger scale, and almost all the Austrian staff-officers were virtually gained over (*enfoncés*). I had intrusted Savary, who was employed in the management of the *espionnage* at the grand headquarters, with all my secret notes upon Germany, and, with his hands full, he worked quickly and successfully, assisted by the famous Schulmeister, a very Proteus in subornation and the mysteries of *espionnage*.

All the breaches being once made, to effect the prodigies of Ulm, the bridge of Vienna and of Austerlitz was mere play to the valour of our troops, and the skill of our manœuvres. Upon the approach of these grand battles, the Emperor Alexander ran blindly into the snare; had he delayed only for a fortnight, Prussia, already urged, would have entered the league.

Thus Napoleon, by a single blow, destroyed the concerted plans of the continental powers. But this glorious campaign

[1] In his book *of the Prince*, Chap. xviii.—*Note of the French Editor.*

was not without its reverse side of the medal; I mean the disaster of Trafalgar, which, by the ruin of our navy, completed the security of Great Britain. It was a few days after the capitulation of Ulm, and upon the Vienna road, that Napoleon received the despatch containing the first intelligence of this misfortune. Berthier has since related to me, that while seated at the same table with Napoleon, he read the fatal paper, but, not daring to present it to him, he pushed it gradually with his elbows under his eyes. Scarcely had Napoleon glanced through its contents, than he started up full of rage, exclaiming, "I cannot be everywhere!" His agitation was extreme, and Berthier despaired of tranquillizing him. Napoleon took his vengeance upon England in the plains of Austerlitz, keeping by this means the Russians at a distance, paralyzing the Prussians, and dictating severe conditions to Austria.

Engaged with war and diplomatic intrigues, it was scarcely possible for him, in the midst of his soldiers, to enter into all the details of the administration of the empire. The council governed in his absence; and, by the importance of my functions, I found myself, in some sort, prime minister; at least no person tried to elude my influence. But it entered into the emperor's views to make it be believed that even in his camp he knew all, saw all, and provided for all. His official correspondents, at Paris, were eager to address to him, dressed up in fine phrases, all the trifling facts which they gleaned from my bulletins of police. Napoleon was above all desirous that people might be simple enough to believe that the interior of the country enjoyed a mild government, and a liberality which gained every heart. It was for this reason that, during the same campaign, he affected to rebuke me, through the *Moniteur* and his bulletins, for having refused Collin d'Harleville permission to print one of his plays. "Where should we be," cried he, hypocritically, "if the permission of a censor were necessary in France for making our senti-

ments known in print?" I, who knew him, only saw in this peevishness an indirect hint for me to hasten my organization of the censorship, and my appointment of censors. A still more serious expression of ill-humour took place upon his return to Paris, on the 26th of January, after the peace of Presbourg. It first showed itself at the Tuileries in a burst of displeasure which fell upon several functionaries, and especially upon the venerable Barbé-Marbois; the cause was some difficulty in the payments of the bank at the commencement of hostilities. This embarrassment he had himself caused by carrying off from the vaults of the bank above fifty millions. Placed upon the backs of King Philip's mules, these millions had powerfully contributed to the prodigious success of this unexpected campaign. But are we not still too near these events for us to remove the veil from before them, without inconvenience?

The peace of Presbourg rendered Bonaparte master of the whole of Germany and Italy, and he soon seized the kingdom of Naples. Being upon bad terms with the court of Rome, he immediately commenced to harass the pope, who had so lately traversed the Alps to give him the holy unction. This glorious peace produced another very important result —the erection of the electorates of Bavaria and Wirtemberg into kingdoms, and the marriage of the King of Bavaria's daughter with Eugène Beauharnais, Napoleon's adopted son. Such was the first link of those alliances which at last ruined Bonaparte, who was already less interested in his own glory, than infatuated with the wish of distributing crowns, and of mingling his blood with that of the old dynasties against which he was continually taking up arms.

In the interior, the battle of Austerlitz and the peace reconciled Bonaparte with public opinion—all eyes began to be dazzled by the splendour of his victories. I congratulated him upon this happy improvement in the public mind. "Sire," said I to him, "Austerlitz has destroyed the old

aristocracy ; the Faubourg St. Germain can no longer form conspiracies." He was delighted at it, and owned to me that in battle, in the greatest dangers, and even in the midst of deserts, he had always in view the good opinion of Paris, and especially of the Faubourg St. Germain. He was Alexander the Great, constantly directing his thoughts towards Athens. The old nobility were, therefore, now seen besieging the Tuileries, as well as my audience-room, and soliciting, nay begging for appointments. The old republicans reproached me with protecting the nobles. This did not, however, make me alter my plan ; I had besides a grand object in view, that of extinguishing and converting all party spirit into an undivided interest in the government. Much severity, qualified by mildness, had pacified the departments of the west, so long agitated by civil war. We could now affirm that neither Vendeans nor Chouans any longer existed. The disaffected, as well as the emigrants, wandered in small numbers through England. Many of the old chiefs had made a sincere submission ; few held out. All secret organizations and dangerous intrigues were at an end. The Royalist Association of Bordeaux, one of the firmest, was broken up. All the agents of the Bourbons in the interior had either been successively gained over, or had become known, from M. Hyde de Neuville and the Chevalier de Coigny, to Talon and M. Royer-Colard. Some emissaries, suspected of hostile intentions, had been severely dealt with, among whom was the Baron de la Rochefoucald, who died in a state prison. As to old Talon, arrested by Savary upon his estate at Gâtinais, in consequence of an *ex-officio* accusation, he at first experienced such brutal treatment, that I informed the emperor of it. Savary was reprimanded. Talon's daughter, a most interesting girl,[1] excited a general sympathy, and contributed in a great degree to alleviate her father's fate : she herself

[1] Now the Countess du Cayla.—*Note by the Editor.*

saved some important papers. I heartily interested myself in affording relief to the victims of the royal cause, as well as to the martyrs of republican sentiments. Such a system, adopted by me, at first astonished every one; but it afterwards procured me crowds of partisans. I really appeared likely to succeed in converting the police, an instrument of inquisitorial power and severity, into one of mildness and indulgence. But an evil genius interfered; I was continually beset by jealousy, envy, and intrigue, on one side; and, on the other, by the want of confidence and the mistrust of my master. Finding itself supported, the counter-revolutionary faction, under the mask of a religious and anti-philosophical society, adopted the system of traducing and removing all who had taken part in the revolution, and of completely surrounding the emperor. For this purpose, and with the view of commanding public opinion, it got possession of the journals and of literature in general. Affecting to defend taste and the *Belles Lettres*, it carried on a mortal war against the revolution, whether in the pamphlets of Geoffroi, or in the columns of the *Mercure*. While invoking the grand era of a temperate monarchy, it, at the same time, was working for a power without control and without limits. As to Napoleon, he attached no political importance, as an organ, to any paper but the *Moniteur*, thinking he had made it the power and soul of his government, as well as his medium of communication with public opinion both at home and abroad. Finding himself more or less imitated, in this respect, by other governments, he thought himself certain of this moral engine.

I was supposed to be the regulator of the public mind, and of the journals which were its organs; and I had even bureaux for this business. Some persons, however, did not fail to observe that this was placing too much power and strength in my hands. The *Journal des Débats* was accordingly removed from my control, and placed under that of

one of my personal enemies.[1] They thought to console me in some degree for this, by permitting me to snatch the *Mercure* from the hands of the counter-revolutionary faction. But the system of depriving me of the journals was not less acted upon in the cabinet, and I was soon reduced to the *Publiciste* of Suard, and the *Décade Philosophique* of Ginguené.

The influence of Fontanes having continually increased since his advancement to the presidency of the legislative corps, he used his utmost to introduce his friends into the avenues of power. His devoted writer, M. Molé, the inheritor of a name illustrious in the parliamentary annals, produced his *Essais de Morale et de Politique*, a most injudicious apology for despotism as it is exercised in Morocco. Fontanes passed great eulogiums upon this essay in the *Journal des Débats;* I complained of it. The emperor publicly blamed Fontanes, who excused himself by his desire of encouraging such *distinguished talents in so distinguished a name.* It was upon this occasion that the emperor said to him, "In God's name! M. de Fontanes, leave us at least the republic of letters."

But the game was now played; the young adept of the imperial orator was almost immediately named auditor of the council of state, then *naître des requètes*, and minister *in petto.*

It must be also confessed that the emperor willingly permitted himself to be gulled by the charm of the names of the old régime; he likewise allowed himself to be seduced by the magic of the eloquence of Fontanes, who panegyrized him with dignity, whilst so many others only offered him gross and vulgar flattery. Some idea may be formed of the disposition of the public mind, and the tendency of literature at this period, from the fact that, that very year, there appeared a history of La Vendée, in which

[1] Doubtless M. Fiévée.—*Note by the Editor.*

the Vendeans were represented as heroes, and the republicans as incendiaries and cut-throats. Nor was this all: this history, considered as impartial, and cried up as possessing the greatest interest, was eagerly purchased,—and, in fact, became the rage of the day. All the revolutionary party were highly indignant at it. I was obliged to interfere, in order to apply an antidote capable of counteracting the assertions of this historian of stage-coach plunderers (*détrousseurs de diligences*[1]).

In the meantime, the consequences and political advantages of Austerlitz and Presbourg were about to be immense. First, by an imperial decree, Joseph Bonaparte was proclaimed king of the Two Sicilies, the *Moniteur* having previously announced that the dynasty then upon the throne had *ceased to reign*. Almost immediately afterwards Louis Bonaparte was proclaimed king of Holland, a crown, no doubt, to be envied, but one which could not make up for his domestic troubles. Murat had the grand duchy of Berg. The principalities of Lucca and Guastalla were given, as presents, one to Eliza, the other to Paulina. The duchy of Plaisance fell to Lebrun's share; that of Parma to Cambacérès; and, at a later period, the principality of Neufchâtel was given to Berthier.

In a privy council, Napoleon had announced to us, that he intended to dispose of his conquests in a kingly manner, by creating grandees of the empire and a new nobility. Shall I confess it? When, at a council more numerously attended, he proposed the question, whether the establishment of hereditary titles was contrary to the principles of equality which almost all of us professed, we replied in the negative? In fact, the empire, being a new monarchy, the creation of grand officers, of grand dignitaries, and the supply of a new nobility appeared indispensable to us.

[1] Fouché, no doubt, here alludes to the pamphlet of M. de Vauban, which was published at that time by the police to counterbalance the effect produced by the history of the war of La Vendée.—*Note by the Editor.*

Besides, the object was to reconcile ancient France with modern France, and to cause all remains of feudality to disappear, by attaching the ideas of nobility to services rendered the state.

On the 30th of March, appeared an imperial decree, which Napoleon was satisfied with communicating to the senate, and which erected into duchies, grand fiefs of the empire, Dalmatia, Istria, Friuli, Cadora, Belluno, Conegliano, Trevisa, Feltre, Bassano, Vicenza, Padua, and Rovigo, Napoleon reserving to himself the conferring the investiture with right of succession. It is for contemporaries to judge who were among the small number of the elect.

Created Prince of Benevento, the minister Talleyrand possessed that principality as a fief immediately dependent upon the imperial crown. I had also a handsome prize in this lottery, and was not long before I ranked myself, under the title of Duke of Otranto, among the highest feudatories of the empire.

Till then, all fusion or amalgamation of the old nobility with the leaders of the revolution would have called down the reprobation of public opinion. But the creation of new titles and of a national nobility effaced the line of demarcation, and gave rise to a new system of manners among the higher classes.

An event of greater importance, the dissolution of the Germanic body, was also the consequence of the prodigious extension of the empire. In July appeared the treaty of the Confederation of the Rhine. Fourteen German princes declared their separation from the Germanic body, and their new confederation, under the protection of the French emperor. This new federative act, drawn up with much talent, was especially designed to isolate Prussia, and to fix still firmer the yoke imposed upon the Germans.

This, and the disagreements which arose between France and Prussia, had the effect of unmasking Russia, whose policy had for some time appeared equivocal. She refused

to ratify the treaty of peace recently concluded, alleging that her envoy had exceeded his instructions. In her tergiversations we only saw an artifice for gaining time.

Since the decease of William Pitt, whose death had been occasioned by grief, caused by the disasters of the last coalition, England negotiated under the auspices of Charles Fox, who had succeeded again to the direction of affairs. Much was expected from a minister who had constantly reprobated the coalitions formed for the purpose of re-establishing in France the old dynasty.

In the meantime, the war with Prussia broke out, a war which had been hatching since the battle of Austerlitz, and which was less caused by the counsels of the cabinet than by the compilers of secret memoirs. They began by representing the Prussian monarchy as ready to fall at the least puff, like a house built with cards. I have read several of these memoirs, one, amongst others, very artfully written by Montgaillard, who was then in high pay. I can affirm, that for the last three months, this war was prepared like a *coup de théâtre;* all the chances and vicissitudes had been calculated, and weighed, with the greatest exactness.

I considered it ill-becoming the dignity of crowned heads to see a cabinet so ill regulated. The Prussian monarchy, whose safeguard it should have been, depended upon the cunning of some intriguers and the energy of a few subsidized persons, who were the very puppets of our will. Jena! history will one day develop thy secret causes.

The delirium caused by the wonderful results of the Prussian campaign completed the intoxication of France. She prided herself upon having been saluted with the name of the great nation by her emperor, who had triumphed over the genius and the work of Frederick.

Napoleon believed himself the son of Destiny, called to break every sceptre. Peace, and even a truce with England, was no longer thought of; the rupture of the negotiations, the death of Charles Fox, the departure of Lord Lauderdale,

and the arrogance of the victor, were events rapidly succeeding each other. The idea of destroying the power of England, the sole obstacle to universal monarchy, now became his fixed resolve. It was with this view he established the *continental* system, the first decree concerning which was dated from Berlin. Napoleon was convinced, that by depriving England of all the outlets for its manufactures, he should reduce it to poverty, and that it must then submit to its fate. He not only thought of subjecting it, but also of effecting its destruction.

Little acted upon by delusion, and enabled to see and observe all, I foresaw the misfortunes which would sooner or later fall upon the people. It was still worse when the lists were to be entered against the Russians. The battle of Eylau, of which I had detailed accounts, made me tremble. There, everything had been disputed to the last extremity. It was no longer the puppets which fell as at Ulm, Austerlitz, and Jena. The sight was equally grand and terrible, when each soldier engaged with an enemy in close combat, at a distance of three hundred leagues from the Rhine. I seized my pen, and wrote to Napoleon nearly in the same terms I had used before Marengo, but in entering more fully in the details, for the circumstances were more complicated, I told him that we were sure of maintaining tranquillity in France ; that Austria could not stir ; that England hesitated to unite itself with Russia, whose cabinet appeared to be vacillating ; but that the loss of a battle between the Vistula and the Niemen would compromise all ; that the Berlin decree clashed with too many interests ; and that, in making war upon kings, care should be taken not to make it upon the people, nor to exasperate it. I entreated him, in terms the most urgent, to employ all his genius, all his powers of destruction and policy, to bring about quickly a glorious peace, like all those for which we had been indebted to his good fortune. He understood me ; but one more victory was necessary.

From the victory of Eylau, he evinced real discretion and ability; so strong in conception, so energetic in character, and pursuing his object, that of overcoming the Russian cabinet, with unceasing perseverance. Nothing of consequence escaped him; his eye was everywhere. Many intrigues were formed against him on the continent, but without success. Agents were despatched from London to try Paris, to try even myself.

Only imagine the English cabinet falling into the snares of our police, even after the mystifications of Drake and Spencer Smith; only imagine Lord Howick, minister of state for foreign affairs, despatching an emissary to me with secret instructions, and the bearer of a letter for me enclosed in the knobs of a cane. This minister requested of me two blank passports for two agents intrusted to open a secret negotiation with me. But his emissary having imprudently disclosed his object to the agent of the prefecture, Perlet, the vile instrument of the whole plot, the bamboo of Vitel was opened, and the mission being discovered, together with the secret, nothing could save the life of the unfortunate young man.

It was impossible but that such a circumstance should produce some mistrust in the mind of Napoleon; he must, at least, have supposed that the idea in foreign countries was that intrigues could be tried upon me, and that I was a man capable of listening to everything, of seizing upon everything, leaving to the times to direct my decision. Nor was this the only overture of this kind, for such was the blindness of the men who solicited for the cabinet of St. James', in the interests of the counter-revolution, that they persuaded themselves I was not averse to work in favour of the Bourbons, and to betray Buonaparte. This was wholly founded upon the opinion generally disseminated, that, instead of persecuting the royalists in the interior, I, on the contrary, sought to guard and protect them; that, besides, any one applying personally to me, with the intention of

making disclosures of any sort, was always welcome. So much was this the case, that a few months after the death of Vitel, having taken up from off my desk a sealed letter directed *private*, I opened it, and found it so urgent, that I granted a private audience to the person who requested it for the next day. This letter was signed by a borrowed name, but one well known among the emigrants, and I really thought that the subscriber was the person who was desirous of an interview. But what was my surprise, when this person, full of confidence, gifted with a language the most persuasive, and displaying manners the most elegant, owned his artifice, and dared to avow before me that he was an agent of the Bourbons and the envoy of the English cabinet! In an animated but rapid manner, he proved the fragility of Napoleon's power, his approaching decline (it was at the commencement of the Spanish war), and his inevitable fall. He then concluded by conjuring me, for the welfare of France and the peace of the world, to join the good cause, to save the nation from the abyss———; all possible guarantees were offered me. And who was this man? Count Daché, formerly captain in the royal navy. "Unfortunate man," said I to him, "you have introduced yourself into my cabinet by means of a subterfuge." "Yes," cried he, "my life is in your hands, and, if it be necessary, I shall willingly sacrifice it for my God and my king." "No," rejoined I, "you are seated on my hearth, and I will not violate the hospitality due to misfortune; for, as a man, and not as a magistrate, I can pardon the excess of your error, and your imprudent step. I allow you twenty-four hours to leave Paris; but I declare to you that, at the expiration of that time, strict orders will be given for your discovery and apprehension; I know whence you come; I know your chain of correspondence, and therefore reflect well that this is only a truce of twenty-four hours; and even I shall not be able to save you in this short space of time, if your secret and your conduct be known to any but myself." He assured

me that not a soul had the least idea of it, neither abroad nor in France ; and that those even who had received him upon the coast were ignorant of his having hazarded himself as far as Paris. "Well," said I to him, "I give you twenty-four hours ; go."

I should have been deficient in my duty, had I not informed the emperor of what had passed. The only alteration which I allowed myself to make, was the supposition of a safe conduct previously obtained from me by Count Daché, under pretext of important information he was desirous of making to me alone. This was indispensable, for I was certain that Napoleon would have disapproved of my generosity, and would even have perceived something suspicious in it. Independently of the police orders, he himself gave some extremely rigorous ones from his cabinet, so much he feared his enemies' energy and decision. The whole of the police agents were set in motion against the unfortunate count, and such was their perseverance, that, at the moment of re-embarking for London, on the coast of Calvados, he perished by a dreadful death, having been betrayed by a woman, whose name is now an object of execration among those of his party.

It may easily be conceived that so hazardous and perilous a mission would never have been given or executed immediately after the negotiations and the treaty of Tilsit, the glorious result of the victory of Friedland.

I have now to characterize this grand epoch of Napoleon's political life. The event was calculated to fascinate all minds. The old aristocracy was seduced by it. "*Why is he not a legitimate?*" said they, in the Faubourg St. Germain ; "Alexander and Napoleon approach each other, the war ceases, and a hundred millions of men enjoy repose and tranquillity." These fine, empty words gained credit, and it was not perceived that the *duumvirate* of Tilsit was but a disguised treaty of a division of the world between two potentates and two empires, which, once in contact, must end by clashing together.

In the secret treaty, Alexander and Napoleon shared between them the continental world; all the south was abandoned to Napoleon, already master of Italy and arbiter of Germany, pushing his advanced post as far as the Vistula, and making Dantzic one of the most formidable arsenals.

Upon his return to St. Cloud, on the 27th of July, he received the most insipid and extravagant adulations from all the principal authorities. Every day I perceived the change which infatuation wrought in this great character; he became more and more reserved with his ministers. A week after his return, he made striking changes in the ministry. The portfolio of war was intrusted to General Clarke, since Duke of Feltre, and that of the home department to Cretet, at that time only a councillor of state; Berthier was made vice-constable. But what caused the greatest astonishment was to see the portfolio of foreign affairs pass into the hands of Champagny, since Duke de Cadore. To deprive M. de Talleyrand of this department was a sign of disgrace, which was, however, disguised by favours merely honorary. M. de Talleyrand was promoted to be vice-grand elector, which did not fail to furnish subject matter for the punsters. It is certain that a disagreement of opinion upon the projects relative to Spain was the principal cause of his disgrace; but this important subject had as yet only been treated of in a confidential manner between the emperor and him. At this period, the question had never been agitated in the council, at least, in my presence. But I penetrated the mystery before even the secret treaty of Fontainbleau, which was executed towards the end of October. The same as that of Presburgh, the treaty of Tilsit was signalized by the erection of a new kingdom, conferred upon Jerome, in the very heart of Germany. The new king was installed in it, under the direction of preceptors assigned him by his brother, who reserved to himself the supremacy in the political guidance of the new tributary monarch.

About this time was known the success of the attack upon Copenhagen by the English, which was the first blow given to the secret stipulations of Tilsit, in virtue of which the navy of Denmark was to be placed at the disposal of France. Since the catastrophe of Paul I., I never saw Napoleon abandon himself to more violent transports. What most struck him, in this vigorous enterprise, was the promptness of the resolution of the English ministry. He suspected a fresh infidelity in the cabinet, and charged me to discover if it was connected with the mortification attendant upon a recent disgrace. I again represented to him how difficult it was, in so mysterious a labyrinth, to discover anything except by instinct or conjecture: "The traitors," said I, "must voluntarily betray themselves, for the police never know but what is told it, and that which chance discovers is little indeed." Upon this subject I had a curious and truly historical conference with a personage who has survived, and who still survives all; but my present situation does not permit me to disclose the particulars of it.

The affairs of the interior were conducted upon a system analogous with that pursued abroad, and which began to develop itself. On the 18th of September, the remains of the Tribunat were at length suppressed; not that the small minority of the tribunes could offer any hostility, but because it entered into the emperor's plans not to allow the previous discussion of the laws; these were only in future to be presented by commissioners. Here opens the memorable year of 1808, the period of a new era, in which Napoleon's star began to wax dim. I had, at length, a confidential communication of the real object which had induced him to enter into the secret treaty of Fontainebleau, and to determine upon the invasion of Portugal. Napoleon announced to me that the Bourbons of Spain, and the house of Braganza, would shortly cease to reign. "It is very well as to Portugal," said I to him, "it is truly an English colony;

but with respect to Spain you have no cause for complaint: those Bourbons are, and will be as long as you wish it, your most humble prefects. Besides, are you not mistaken with respect to the character of the Peninsular people? Take care; you have, it is true, many partisans there; but only because they consider you as a great and powerful potentate, as a friend and an ally. If you declare without any cause against the reigning family; if, taking advantage of their domestic dissensions, you realize the fable of the oyster and the lawyers, you must declare against the majority of the population. Besides, you cannot be ignorant that the Spaniards are not a cold, phlegmatic people, like the Germans; they are attached to their manners, their government, and old customs; the mass of the nation is not to be judged from the highest classes of society, they are, as everywhere else, corrupted, and have little patriotism. Once more, take care you do not transform a tributary kingdom into a new Vendée." "What do you talk about?" replied he; "every reflecting person in Spain despises the government; the Prince of the Peace, a true mayor of the palace,[1] is detested by the nation; he is a scoundrel who will himself open the gates of Spain for me. As to the rabble, whom you have mentioned, who are still under the influence of monks and priests, a few cannon-shot will quickly disperse them. You have seen the warlike Prussia, that heritage of the great Frederic, fall before my arms like an old ruinous cottage; well, you will see Spain surrender itself into my hands, without knowing it, and afterward applaud itself; I have there an immense party. I have resolved to continue in my own dynasty the family system of Louis XIV., uniting Spain to the destinies of France. I am desirous of availing myself of the only opportunity afforded me by fortune of regenerating Spain, of detaching

[1] Here allusions are made to the *Maires du Palais*, who, under the reigns of the *Rois fainéans*, governed the affairs of the state.—*English Editor.*

it entirely from England, and of uniting it inseparably to my system. Consider that the sun never sets in the immense inheritance of Charles V., and that I shall have the empire of both worlds."

I found that it was a design resolved upon, that all the counsels of reason would avail nothing, and that the torrent must be left to take its course. However, I thought it my duty to add, that I entreated his majesty to consider in his wisdom, whether all that was taking place was not a *ruse-de-guerre;* whether the north was not anxious to embroil him with the south, as a useful diversion, and with the ultimate view of reuniting with England, at a convenient opportunity, in order to place the empire between two fires. "You are," cried he, "a true minister of police, who mistrusts everything, and believes in nothing good. I am sure of Alexander, who is very sincere; I now exercise over him a kind of charm, independently of the guarantee offered me by those about him, of whom I am equally certain." Here Napoleon related to me all the trifling nonsense which I had heard from his suite respecting the interview at Tilsit, and the sudden predilection of the Russian court for the emperor and his people; he did not omit the flattery by means of which he believed he had captivated the Grand Duke Constantine himself, who, it is said, was not displeased at being told that he was the best-dressed prince in Europe, and had the finest thigh in the world.

These confidential effusions were not useless to me. Seeing Napoleon in good-humour, I again spoke to him in favour of several persons for whom I particularly interested myself, and who all received valuable employments. He began to be more pleased with the Faubourg St. Germain, and approving my liberal mode of directing the police, as respected the old aristocracy, he told me that there were, near Bourdeaux,[1] two families whom I regarded as dis-

[1] Apparently, the families Donnissan and Larochejaquelein, united by the marriage of the Marquis de Larochejaquelein, who died in 1815, with the

affected and dangerous, but he wished them not to be molested, that is, that they should be watched, but without any species of inquisition. "You have often told me," added Napoleon, "that you ought to be like me, the mediator between the old and new order of things: that is your office; for that, in fact, is my policy in the interior. But, as to my politics abroad, do not meddle with that; leave me to act; and, above all, do not take upon you to defend the pope; it would be too ridiculous on your part; leave that care to M. de Talleyrand, who is indebted to him for being now a secular, and possessing a beautiful wife in lawful wedlock." I began to laugh, and taking up my portfolio, made way for the minister of the marine.

What Napoleon had just said to me about the pope, alluded to his disputes with the holy see, which began in 1805, and were daily growing more serious. The entrance of our troops into Rome coincided with the invasion of the Peninsula. Pius VII. almost immediately issued a brief, in which he threatened Napoleon that he would direct his spiritual weapons against him: no doubt they were much blunted, but they had, nevertheless, their effect upon many minds. In my eyes, these disputes appeared the more impolitic, inasmuch as they could not fail to alienate a great part of the people of Italy, and among ourselves, to favour the *petite église*[1] which had annoyed us for a long time; it began to avail itself of it to make common cause with the pope against the government. But Napoleon only proceeded to extremities against the head of the church, that he might have a pretext for seizing Rome, and despoiling it of its temporalities; this was one branch of his vast plan of a

widow of the Marquis de Lescure, daughter of the Marchioness de Donnissan; they then inhabited the château of Citran, in Médoc.

[1] By *petite église*, is meant that part of the French clergy who did not approve of the *Concordat*, and who, consequently, were not employed by Napoleon's government. Their influence was nevertheless powerful, being considered, by all who called themselves good Catholics, as the supporters of the true principles.—*English Editor.*

universal monarchy, and of the reorganization of Europe. I would willingly have seconded it, but I saw, with regret, that it rested upon false bases, and that opinion already began to resist. How, in fact, was it possible to proceed thus to the conquest of all countries, without having at least the nations on our side? Before imprudently saying that his dynasty, which was but the dynasty of yesterday, should soon be the most ancient of Europe, he ought to have understood the art of separating kings from their people, and for that purpose not have abandoned principles, without which he himself could not exist.

This affair of Rome was now forgotten in the events which took place at Madrid and Bayonne, where Napoleon arrived, on the 15th of April, with his court and suite. Spain was already invaded; and, under the mask of friendship, the French had taken possession of the principal fortresses in the north.

Having seized Spain, and full of hopes, Napoleon now prepared to appropriate to himself the treasures of the new world, which five or six adventurers came to offer him as the infallible result of their intrigues. All the springs of this vast plot were wound up; they extended from the château of Marrac to Madrid, Lisbon, Cadiz, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico. Napoleon was followed by his private establishment of political imposture: his Duke of Rovigo, Savary, his Archbishop of Malines, the Abbé Pradt, his Prince Pignatelli, and many other tools, more or less active in his diplomatic frauds. The ex-minister Talleyrand was also in his suite, but more as a passive observer than an agent.

I had warned Napoleon, on the eve of his departure, that the public opinion became irritated by the anxiety of expectation; and that the talk of the day had already reached a height which my three hundred regulators of Paris could not suppress.

This was still worse when events developed themselves; when, by stratagem and perfidy, all the family of Spain

found itself caught in the Bayonne nets; when the Madrid massacre of the 2nd of May took place; and when the rising of nearly a whole nation had set almost the whole of the Peninsula in a conflagration. All was known and ascertained in Paris, notwithstanding the incredible efforts of all the police establishments to intercept or prevent the knowledge of public events. Never, in the whole course of my two ministries, did I see so decided a reprobation of the insatiable ambition and Machiavelism of the head of the state. This convinced me, that in an important crisis truth asserts all its rights, and regains all its empire. I received from Bayonne two or three very harsh letters, respecting the bad state of the public mind, for which I seemed to be in some degree considered as responsible; my bulletins were a sufficient answer. Towards the end of July, after the capitulation of Baylen, it became impossible to restrain it. The counter-police and the emperor's private correspondents took the alarm; they even were so much mistaken as to put him on his guard against the symptoms of a conspiracy in Paris totally imaginary. The emperor quitted Bayonne in all haste, after several violent fits of rage, which were metamorphosed, in the saloons of the Chaussée d'Antin and the Faubourg Saint Germain, into a fit of brain fever. Traversing La Vendée, he returned to Saint Cloud, by the Loire. I expected some severe observations, upon my first audience, and was consequently on my guard. "You have been too indulgent, Duke d'Otranto," were his first words. "How could you allow so many nests of babblers and slanderers to be formed in Paris?" "Sire, when the thing becomes general, there is no possibility to punish; besides, the police cannot penetrate into the interior of families and the confidence of friendship." "But foreigners have excited disaffection in Paris?" "No, Sire, the public discontent broke out of itself: old passions have been revived, and, in this respect, there has been much ill-will. But nations cannot be roused, without arousing the

passions. It would be impolitic, imprudent even, to exasperate the public mind, by unseasonable severity. This disturbance has likewise been exaggerated to your majesty; it will be appeased, as so many others have been; all will depend upon this Spanish business, and the attitude assumed by Continental Europe. Your majesty has surmounted difficulties much more serious, and crises much more important." It was then, that striding up and down his cabinet, he again spoke to me of the Spanish war, as a mere skirmish, which scarcely deserved a few cannon-shot; at the same time flying into a rage against Murat, Moncey, and especially Dupont, whose capitulation he stigmatized with the term infamous, declaring that he would make an example in the army. "I will conduct this war of peasants and monks," continued he, "myself, and I hope to thrash the English soundly. I will immediately come to an understanding with the Emperor Alexander, for the ratification of the treaties and the preservation of the tranquillity of Europe. In three months I will take back my brother to Madrid, and in four I, myself, will enter Lisbon, if the English dare to set foot there. I will punish this rabble, and will drive out the English." All was henceforth conducted upon this plan of operations. Confidential agents and couriers were despatched to St. Petersburg. The favourable answer was not long delayed. The town of Erfurt was chosen for the interview of the two emperors. Nothing could be more auspicious than this interview, where, at the end of September, the czar came to fraternize with Napoleon. These two formidable arbiters of the continent spent eighteen days together in the greatest intimacy, in the midst of fêtes and amusements. Recourse was also had to a diplomatic mummery sent to the King of England, for the apparent purpose of obtaining his being a party to the general peace. I had given the emperor, before his departure, information that ought to have undeceived him; but what do I say? He, perhaps,

believed no more than myself, in the possibility of a peace with which he would not have known what to do.

Erfurt brought back opinion. At the opening of the legislative corps, on the 26th of October, Napoleon, on his return, declared himself to be indissolubly united with the Emperor Alexander both for peace and war. "*Soon*," said he, "*my eagles shall hover over the towers of Lisbon.*"

But this circumstance revealed, to reflecting minds, his weakness in a national war, which he dared not prosecute without a support in Europe, which might escape him. It was no longer Napoleon acting by himself. His embarrassments became serious from the time of his declaring war against the nations.

Spain, the gulf in which Napoleon was about to plunge, raised in me many gloomy forebodings ; I saw in it a centre of resistance, supported by England, and which might offer to our continental enemies favourable opportunities of again assailing our political existence. It was melancholy to reflect that by an imprudent enterprise, the solidity of our conquests, and even our existence as a nation, had become a matter of doubt. By continually encountering new dangers, Napoleon, our founder, might fall either by ball or bullet, or sink under the knife of the fanatic. It was but too true that all our power centred in a single man, who, without posterity, without certainty as to the future, demanded of Providence at least twenty years, to complete and consolidate his work. If he were taken from us before this term, he would not even have, like Alexander the Macedonian, his own lieutenants for the inheritors of his power and glory, nor for the guarantee of our existence. Thus this vast and formidable empire, created as if by enchantment, had nothing but a fragile foundation, which might vanish on the wings of death. The hands which had assisted in its elevation were too weak to support it without a living stay. If the serious circumstances, in which we were placed, gave rise to these reflections in my mind, the

peculiar situation of the emperor added to them the greatest degree of solicitude and anxiety.

The charm of his domestic habits was broken ; death had carried off that infant, who, at the same time, his nephew and adopted son, had by his birth drawn so close the ties which bound him to Joséphine through Hortense, and to Hortense through Joséphine. " I recognize myself," said he, "in this child!" And he already indulged the fond idea that he would succeed him. How often, on the terrace of St. Cloud, after his breakfast, has he been seen to contemplate with transport this tender offspring, whose disposition and manners were so engaging, and, resting from the cares of the empire, join in its childish games! Did the boy evince ever so little determination, ever so trifling a predilection for the noise of the drum, of arms or the imagery of war, Napoleon would cry out with enthusiasm: "This boy will be worthy to succeed me—he may even surpass me!" At the very moment such high destinies were preparing for him, this beautiful child, a victim to the croup, was snatched away from him. Thus was broken a reed on which a great man thought he might lean.

Never did I see Napoleon a prey to deeper and more concentrated grief; never did I see Joséphine and her daughter in more agonizing affliction : they appeared to find in it a mournful presentiment of a futurity without happiness and without hope. The courtiers themselves sympathized with them, in a misfortune so severe ; as for myself, I thought I saw the link of the perpetuity of the empire breaking.

It would ill have become me to have kept within my own breast the suggestions of my foresight ; but in order to make them known to Napoleon, I waited till time should have in some manner alleviated his grief. With him, besides, the pains of the heart were subordinate to the cares of empire, to the highest combinations of policy and war. What greater diversion could he have? But, already, distractions

of a different kind and more efficacious consolations had soothed his regrets, and broken the monotony of his habits: officiously encouraged by his confidant Duroc, he had given himself up, not to the love of women, but to the physical enjoyment of their charms. Two ladies of the court have been mentioned as being honoured with his stolen embraces, and who were just replaced by the beautiful Italian, Charlotte Gaz—— born Brind——. Napoleon, captivated by her beauty, had conferred a recent favour upon her. It was also known, that being freed from the restraints of common domesticity, he no longer had the same room nor the same bed as Joséphine. This kind of nuptial separation had taken place in consequence of a violent altercation caused by the jealousy of his wife,[1] and since then he had refused to resume the domestic chain. As to Joséphine, her torments were much less occasioned by a wounded heart, than by the thorns of unquiet apprehensions. She was alarmed at the consequences of the sudden loss of Hortense's son, of the neglect of her daughter, and the abandonment of herself. She foresaw the future, and lamented her sterility.

The concurrence of these circumstances, both political and domestic, and the fear of one day seeing their emperor, when age approached, follow the traces of a Sardanapalus, suggested to me the idea of endeavouring to give a future solidity to a magnificent empire of which I was one of the chief guardians. In a confidential memoir, which I read to him myself, I represented to him the necessity of dissolving his marriage; of immediately forming, as emperor, a new alliance more suitable and more happy; and of giving an heir to the throne on which Providence had placed him. My conclusion was the natural consequence of the strongest and most solid arguments which the necessities of the state could suggest.

Without declaring anything positive upon this serious

[1] In 1805, at the camp of Boulogne, according to the Memorial de Sainte Hélène.—*Note of the Editor.*

and important subject, Napoleon let me perceive that, in a political point of view, the dissolution of his marriage was already determined in his mind, but that he was not yet decided respecting the alliance he intended to form; that, on the other hand, he was singularly attached, both by habit and a kind of superstition, to Joséphine; and that the most painful step for him would be to inform her of the divorce. The whole of this communication was made in a few significant monosyllables, and two or three almost enigmatical phrases; but these were sufficient for me. Urged by an excess of zeal, I resolved to effect the breach, and prepare Joséphine for this great sacrifice, demanded for the solidity of the empire, and the emperor's happiness.

Such an overture required some preliminaries. I waited for an opportunity; it presented itself one Sunday at Fontainebleau, upon returning from mass. There, detaining Joséphine in the recess of a window, I gave, with all precautions and all possible delicacy, the first hint of a separation, which I represented to her as the most sublime and, at the same time, as the most inevitable of sacrifices. She coloured at first; then turned pale; her lips began to swell, and I perceived over her whole frame symptoms which caused me to apprehend a fit of hysterics, or some burst of passion. It was only in a stammering voice that she questioned me, to know if I had been ordered to make her this melancholy communication. I told her I had had no order, but that I foresaw the necessities of the future; and, hastening by some general reflection to break off so painful a conversation, I pretended to have an engagement with one of my colleagues and quitted her. I learnt, the next day, that there had been much grief and agitation in the interior of the palace; that a very passionate but affecting explanation had taken place between Joséphine and Napoleon, who had disowned me; and that this woman, naturally so mild, so good, and being besides under more than one kind of obligation to me, had earnestly solicited as a favour my

dismissal, for having preferred the welfare of France to her personal interests, and to the gratification of her vanity. Although he protested I had spoken without orders, the emperor refused to turn me out (*me chasser*), for that was the word, and he pacified Joséphine as well as he could, by alleging, on my behalf, political pretexts. It was evident to me, that, if he had not already secretly determined upon his divorce, he would have sacrificed me, instead of contenting himself with a mere disavowal of my conduct. But Joséphine was his dupe ; she had not strength of mind sufficient to prevent her flattering herself with vain illusions ; she thought she could obviate all by wretched artifices. Who would believe it ? she proposed to the emperor one of those political frauds which would have been the derision of all Europe, offering to carry on the deception of a fictitious pregnancy. Certain that she would have recourse to this, I had trumpeted forth the possibility of this trick, by means of my agents, so that the emperor had only to show her my police bulletins to get rid of her importunities.

Greater events made a powerful diversion. On the 4th of November, Napoleon, in person, opened the second campaign of the Peninsula, after having drawn from Germany eighty thousand veterans. After kindling an immense conflagration, he was hastening to extinguish it by rivers of blood. But what could he do against a whole nation in arms and revolutionized ? Besides, all now seemed to inspire him with suspicion and inquietude ; he went even so far as to persuade himself that a centre of resistance was forming in Paris, of which M. de Talleyrand and I were the secret promoters.

After learning that one hundred and twenty-five black balls, being one-third of the opponents to his will, had just astonished the legislative corps, he was so shocked and alarmed at it, that he thought fit to despatch from Valladolid, on the 4th of December, an official note, explanatory of the essence of the imperial government, and the place

which he was pleased to assign the legislature in it. "Our misfortunes," said he, "have partly arisen from those exaggerated ideas which have induced a body of men to believe themselves the representative of the nation; it would be a chimerical and even criminal pretension, to wish to represent the nation, before the emperor. The legislative corps should be called the legislative council, since it has not the power of making laws, not having the power of proposing them. In the order of the constitutional hierarchy, the first representative of the nation is the emperor, and his ministers the organs of his decisions. All would fall again into anarchy, if other constitutional ideas were to interfere and pervert those of our monarchical constitution."

These oracles of absolute power would but have exasperated the public mind, under a weak and capricious prince; but Napoleon had continually the sword in his hand, and victory still followed his steps. Thus everything still yielded, and the mere ascendency of his power sufficed to dissipate every germ of legal opposition. When it was known that he had just entered Madrid, with the feelings of an angry conqueror, and that he was determined to surprise and drive the English army before him, the war was supposed to be finished, and I gave instructions to my active agents in consequence. But suddenly leaving the English, and abandoning the war to his lieutenants, the emperor returned amongst us in a sudden and unexpected manner; whether, as those about him assured me, that he was alarmed at the information that a band of Spanish fanatics had sworn to assassinate him (I believed it, and had on my side given the same advice); or whether he was still acted upon by the fixed idea of a coalition in Paris, against his authority, I think both these motives united had their weight with him; but they were disguised by referring the urgency of his sudden return to the preparations of Austria. Napoleon had still three or four months good,

and he knew as well as I, that if Austria was to make a stir, she was not yet ready.

At my first audience, he sounded me upon the affair of the legislative body, and his imperial rebuke. I saw what he meant, and I replied, that it was very well; that it was thus monarchs should govern; that if any body whatsoever arrogated to itself alone the right of representing the sovereign, the only thing to be done would be to dissolve it; and that if Louis XVI. had acted so, that unhappy prince might still have lived and reigned. Fixing upon me eyes full of astonishment—"How! Duke of Otranto," said he to me, after a moment's silence; "if I recollect right, however, you are one of those who sent Louis XVI. to the scaffold!" "Yes, Sire," replied I, without hesitation, "and that is the first service I have had the happiness of rendering your majesty."

Summoning to his aid all the strength of his genius and character, to surmount the aggression of Austria, he arranged his plans, and hastened to execute them with the utmost promptitude. Some apprehensions were entertained, that he might be forced, or else surprised, in the defiles of the Black Mountains, for his forces were not strong, and he would have been reduced to act on the defensive, had he permitted the concentration of the Austrian masses to be effected. Tann, Abensberg, Eckmühl, and Ratisbon, witnessed the rapid triumph of our arms; and signalized the happy commencement of a campaign the more serious, from our carrying on, contrary to the rules of sound politics, two wars at once.

The hostile preparations made by Schill, in Prussia, revealed to us all the danger. This Prussian major, raising the standard of revolt, had just been brought forward by the Schneiders and the Steins, the chiefs of the *illuminati*; it was a weak effort upon the part of Prussia. The inhabitants of the northern part of Germany were very near rising, in imitation of the people of the Peninsula. Hemmed in by

two national wars, Napoleon would have fallen four years sooner. This circumstance caused me to make serious reflections upon the fragility of an empire which had no other support than arms, and no other stimulus than an unbridled ambition.

We breathed again after the occupation of Vienna ; but Schill was still active in Saxony, and the inhabitants of Vienna showed much irritation. Several insurrections took place in the capital of Austria. Soon the first reports of the battle of Essling arrived to renew our alarms, and increase our uneasiness ; these reports were succeeded by confidential communications, almost all afflicting. Not only Lannes, the only remaining friend of Napoleon who dared to tell him the truth, had fallen gloriously ; but we had also eight thousand men killed, eighteen thousand wounded, among whom were three generals, and above five hundred officers of all ranks. If, after losses so serious, the army was saved, it owed its preservation not to Napoleon, but to the coolness of Massena.

Our perplexity in Paris may be easily conceived, as well as what efforts and address were necessary to throw a veil over this severe check, which might be followed by more than one disaster ! As to Napoleon, he declared himself in his bulletins to have been victorious, and to account for not following up his victory, he accused, in rather a trivial manner, *General Danube*, the best officer in the Austrian service. In fact, it was impossible to account for the want of activity in the archduke, after so many losses on our side, and after we could find no other refuge than the Isle of Lobau. In proportion to the impudence of the bulletin, the greater were the comments upon it.

The numerous enemies which Napoleon had in France, whether among the republicans or the royalists, again began to show themselves. The Faubourg St. Germain resumed its hostility, and even some conspiracies were on foot in La Vendée. All those parties openly flattered themselves, that

the affair of Essling would prove a fatal blow to the emperor.

The events upon the Danube so completely absorbed public attention, that scarcely any was bestowed upon those taking place at Rome. It was reserved for us, for us philosophers, the offspring of the 18th century, and adepts of incredulity—it was reserved for us, I say, to deplore as impolitic, the usurpation of the patrimony of St. Peter, and the persecution of the head of the church, by the very person whom we had chosen for our perpetual dictator. A decree of Napoleon's, towards the end of May, had ordered the reunion of the Roman states to the French empire. What was the consequence? The venerable pontiff, clinging to the papal throne, finding himself disarmed, despoiled, and having only at his command spiritual weapons, issued bulls of excommunication against Napoleon and his coadjutors. All this would have only excited ridicule, had the people remained indifferent; if public indignation had not rekindled expiring faith, in favour of the unyielding pontiff of the christians. Then it was that, after sustaining a species of siege in his palace, Pius VII. was forcibly torn from it, and carried from Rome, to be confined in Savona. Napoleon was aware how averse I was to these outrages, therefore I was not intrusted with the direction of them. The Neapolitan police had this charge; the principal instruments against the pope were Murat, Salicetti, Miollis, and Radet. I had to use the greatest efforts, when the pope had arrived in Piedmont, to prevent his being forced to cross the Alps; it would have been upon me that they would willingly have thrown the responsibility of the last scenes of this persecution, which appeared to all so odious and unjust. In spite of the reserve of the government, and the silence of its agents, all the public attention was directed upon Pius VII., who, in the eyes of Europe, was considered as an illustrious and affecting victim of the greedy ambition of the emperor. A prisoner at Savona, Pius VII. was despoiled of all his external honours, and shut

out from all communication with the cardinals, as well as deprived of all means of issuing bulls and assembling a council. What food for the *petite église*, for the turbulence of some priests, and for the hatred of some devotees! I immediately foresaw that all these leavens would reproduce the secret associations we had with so much difficulty suppressed. In fact, Napoleon, by undoing all that he had hitherto done to calm and conciliate the minds of the people, disposed them in the end to withdraw themselves from his power, and even to ally themselves to his enemies, as soon as they had the courage to show themselves in force. But this extraordinary man had not yet lost any of his warlike vigour; his courage and genius raised him above all his errors. My correspondence and bulletins, which he received every day at Vienna, did not dissimulate the truth of things, nor the unhappy state of the public mind. "A month will change all this," he wrote me. In another circumstance, while speaking of our home affairs, he said to me these very words: "I feel no uneasiness whatever; you are here." I had never accumulated on my head so much power, and so much responsibility. The colossal ministry of the police, and *per interim* the portfolio of the interior, were both intrusted to me. But I was reassured, for never had the encouragement of the emperor been so positive, nor his confidence greater. I was near the apogee of ministerial power; but in politics, the apogee often conducts to the Tarpeian rock.

The horizon underwent a sudden change. The battle of Wagram fought and gained, forty-five days after the loss of the battle of Essling, the armistice of Znaïm agreed to six days after the battle of Wagram, and the death of Schill, brought us back days of serenity.

But, in the interval, the English appeared in the Scheldt, with a formidable expedition, which, had it been more ably conducted, might have brought back success to our enemies, and given Austria time to rally.

I perceived the danger. Invested, during the emperor's absence, with a great part of his power, by the union of the two ministries, I instilled energy into the council, of which I was the soul, and caused it to pass several strong measures. No time was to be lost: Belgium was to be saved. The troops that could be disposed of, would not have been sufficient to preserve this important part of the empire. I caused it to be decreed, but without the emperor's concurrence, that at Paris and in several of the northern departments, there should be an immediate and extraordinary levy of national guards.

Upon this occasion, I addressed to all the mayors of Paris a circular, containing the following phrase—"Let us prove to Europe that if the genius of Napoleon can shed lustre around France, his presence is not necessary to repel the enemy."

Who would have believed it? Both this phrase, and the measure which we had taken, gave umbrage to Napoleon, who, by a letter addressed to Cambacérès, ordered the levy to be suspended in Paris, where, for the moment, nothing was done but appointing officers.

I did not at first suspect the real motive of this suspension for the capital, the more so as elsewhere the levy, being carried into execution without any obstacle, and with the utmost rapidity, gave us about forty thousand men, ready equipped and full of ardour. Nothing impeded any more the measures I had caused to be adopted, and the execution of which I had superintended with so much zeal and care. It had been a long time since France had given a spectacle of such a burst of patriotism. During her journey to the waters of Spa, the emperor's mother had been so much struck with it, that, on her return, she congratulated me, herself, upon it.

But it was necessary to appoint a commander-in-chief to this national auxiliary force, which was to assemble under the walls of Antwerp: I was in doubt upon whom to fix,

when Bernadotte unexpectedly arrived from Wagram. On that very day, when I had scarcely heard of his arrival, I proposed him to the minister of war, the Duke de Feltre, who lost no time in giving him his commission.

What was my surprise the next day, when Bernadotte informed me, in the overflowings of confidence and friendship, that, having commanded the left at Wagram, and the Saxons, who composed part of it, having been routed, the emperor, under this pretext, had deprived him of the command, and sent him back to Paris ; that his wing had however behaved well at the close of the battle ; but that he had not been less censured at headquarters for having, in an order of the day, addressed to his soldiers a kind of commendatory proclamation ; that he imputed this new disgrace to the malevolent reports made to the emperor ; that many complaints were made of Savary, who was charged with the secret police of the army ; that Lannes, after having had the most angry and violent scenes with him, could alone restrain him ; but that since the death of that hero, the influence of Savary had become unlimited ; that he watched for opportunities of irritating the emperor against certain generals who were the objects of his dislike ; that he even went so far as to impute to them connexions with the secret society of the *Philadelphians*, which he converted into a scarecrow for the emperor, by supposing, upon vague surmises, that it had dangerous ramifications in the army.

For these reasons, Bernadotte testified some repugnance to accept the commission of commander-in-chief of the national guards of the empire, destined for the defence of Antwerp. I represented to him that, on the contrary, this was the time to re-establish himself in the emperor's confidence ; that I had already several times contributed to reconcile them, and to do away with some misunderstandings between them ; that, with the high rank he held, if he refused to fulfil the commission conferred upon him by the

minister at war, it would seem as if he wished to show his discontent, and to shun an opportunity of rendering fresh services to his country ; that, in case of need, we ought to serve the emperor in spite of himself, and that by thus doing our duty, we devoted ourselves for our country. He understood me, and, after other confidential communications, he set off for Antwerp.

The success attendant upon this movement is well known ; it was general throughout our northern provinces, and the English dared not attempt a landing. So happy a result, joined to the judicious conduct of Bernadotte, compelled Napoleon to keep his suspicions and discontent to himself ; but, in reality, he never pardoned either Bernadotte or me for this eminent service, and our intimacy became more than ever an object of suspicion with him.

Some other private informations, which reached me from the army, perfectly coincided with what I had learnt from Bernadotte respecting the *Philadelphians*, whose secret organization was traced back as far as the perpetual consulship. The members did not affect secrecy ; their object was to restore to France the liberty of which Napoleon had deprived it, by the re-establishment of the nobility and by his concordat. They regretted Bonaparte the first consul, and considered the despotism of Napoleon as emperor insupportable. The suspected existence of this association had already caused the arrest and prolonged detention of Mallet, Guidal, Gindre, Picquerel, and Lahorie ; at that time, the brave Oudet, colonel of the ninth regiment of the line, was suspected of having been raised to the presidency of the *Philadelphians*. A vile accusation having designated him as such, the fate of this unfortunate officer was as follows :—Having been appointed, on the day preceding the battle of Wagram, *general de brigade*,[1] he was, the evening after the action, decoyed during the darkness of

[1] This rank corresponds with that of Major-general in the English army. —*English Editor.*

the night into an ambuscade, where he fell under the fire of a troop supposed to be *gens d'armes;* the following day, he was found lying lifeless, with twenty-two officers of his party killed around him. This circumstance made much noise at Schœnbrunn, at Vienna, and among all the staffs of the army, without, however, any means of fathoming so horrible a mystery.

But, since the armistice, difficulties were slowly overcome; the conclusion of the new treaty of peace with Austria did not arrive; but every letter represented it as certain. We were every moment expecting to receive intelligence of its conclusion, when I learnt that the emperor, while reviewing his guard at Schœnbrunn, had narrowly escaped the dagger of an assassin. Rapp had just time to seize him, Berthier having thrown himself before the emperor. He was a young man of Erfurt, hardly seventeen years of age, and solely excited by patriotic fanaticism; a long sharp knife was found upon him, with which he intended to execute his purpose. He confessed his design, and was flogged to death through the ranks.

The treaty of Vienna was signed a few days after (15th of October); Napoleon, the conqueror and pacificator, returned almost immediately to his capital. It was from his own mouth that we learnt what numerous difficulties he had had to surmount, and how determined and strong had been the opposition of Austria.

I had several conferences with Napoleon, at Fontainebleau, before his entry into Paris, and I found him much exasperated against the Faubourg St. Germain, which had resumed its satirical and sarcastic habits. I could not avoid informing the emperor, that after the battle of Essling, as after the Bayonne affair, the wits of the Faubourg had spread the ridiculous report that he had been struck with mental alienation. Napoleon was extremely incensed at this, and he spoke to me of adopting severe measures with creatures, "who," said he, "tear me with one hand, and solicit with the other." I

dissuaded him from it. "It is proverbial," said I to him, "the Seine flows; the Faubourg intrigues, solicits, spends, and caluminates; it is in the nature of things; who has been more slandered than Julius Cæsar? I will, besides, assure your majesty, that among this party there will be no Cassius or Brutus found. On the other hand, do not the worst reports proceed from your majesty's antechambers? are they not propagated by persons forming part of your establishment and of your government? Before measures of severity could be adopted, a council of ten must be appointed; the doors, the walls, and the chimneys must be interrogated. It is the part of a great man to despise the tattle of insolence, and to stifle it under a mass of glory and renown." He acquiesced.

I knew that, after the battle of Wagram, he had hesitated whether he should dismember the Austrian monarchy; that he had several plans upon this subject; that he had even boasted he would soon distribute crowns to some of the archdukes whom he supposed discontented, or blinded by ambition; but that, arrested by the fear of awakening the suspicions of Russia, and of raising the people of Austria, whose affection for Francis II. could not be called in question, he had had time to appreciate another difficulty in the execution of his plan,—he required the military occupation of the whole of Germany, which would not have permitted him to put an end to the peninsular war, which now claimed all his attention.

The moment appeared to me favourable to make him acquainted with the whole truth. I represented to him, in a confidential report upon our actual situation, how necessary it had become to put a stop to a system of policy which tended to estrange from us the people; and I, first, entreated him to accomplish the work of peace, either by sounding England, or offering her reasonable propositions; adding, that he had never been in a better situation to make them listen to him; that nothing equalled the power of his arms,

and that now there was no longer any doubt on the solidity of his connections with the two most powerful potentates of Europe next himself; that by showing himself moderate in his demands with respect to Portugal, and disposed, on the other hand, to evacuate Prussia, he could not fail to obtain peace, and secure his dynasty in Italy, Madrid, Westphalia, and Holland; that these should be the limits of his ambition and of a lasting glory; that it was already a splendid destiny to have re-created the empire of Charlemagne, but that it became necessary to give this empire guarantees for the future; that, for this purpose, it became urgent, as I had before represented to him, to dissolve his marriage with Joséphine, and to form another union, demanded by state reasons, as much as by the most important political considerations; for, in seeing himself revive in a son, he, at the same time, would assure the existence of the empire; that it was for him alone to determine whether it would be preferable to form a family alliance with one of the two great northern courts, either Russia or Austria, or to isolate himself in his power, and honour his own country by sharing the diadem with a Frenchwoman sufficiently rich in her fecundity and her virtues; but that the plan, suggested by the want of social stability and monarchical permanence, would be destroyed to its foundations, if it were not supported by a general peace. I insisted strongly upon this point, begging him to let me know his intentions upon the two principal views of my report and my conclusions.

I only obtained a tacit assent, the only answer I had been accustomed to hope for upon serious subjects, which were considered out of my province. But I saw that the dissolution of the marriage was settled for no very distant period, Cambacérès having been authorized to confer with me respecting it. I instantly had the rumour set a-foot in the saloons, and it was everywhere whispered, that Joséphine, plunged in security, had not the least hint of it, so much was she pitied and her feelings spared.

I also perceived that the emperor, whether from pride or policy, was inclined to unite himself to one of the old courts of Europe, and that the previous divorce was intended to induce them to make overtures, or prepare them to receive them.

The show of power was not however neglected. Napoleon, having in absolute dependence upon himself the kings whom he had made, sent for them to his court; and on the 3rd of December required them to be present in the metropolitan church to hear *Te Deum* sung in commemoration of his victories, and of the anniversary of his coronation.

Upon quitting Notre Dame, he proceeded to open the sittings of the legislative corps; there, in a presumptuous speech, he expressed himself in these terms:—"When I appear again on the other side of the Pyrenees, the frighted leopard shall seek the ocean to avoid shame, defeat, and death."

It was with these lofty images he endeavoured to palliate the difficulties of the Spanish war, deceiving himself, perhaps; for, with regard to the nature of this contest, he never had but very incorrect ideas.

The next day, during a *tête-à-tête* dinner with Joséphine, he informed her of his resolution. Joséphine fainted away. It required all the rhetoric of Cambacérès, and all the tenderness of her son Eugene, both to calm her transports, and dispose her to resignation.

On the 15th of December, the dissolution of the marriage was proceeded in according to due form; and all being adjusted, an officer of the guard was commissioned to escort Joséphine to Malmaison, whilst the emperor, on his side, went to the grand Trianon to pass a few days there in retirement. The chancery was now fully instructed, though in secrecy, to open a parallel negotiation with the two courts of Saint Petersburg and Vienna; in the first, the grand duchess, sister to the Czar, was the desired object; and in Austria, the archduchess Maria Louisa, daughter of the Emperor

Francis. Russia was first sounded. It was said, in the council, that the Emperor Alexander was favourable to the union, but that there was a difference of opinion in the imperial Russian family.

That which took place at Vienna, almost simultaneously, deserves the mention of a few preliminaries to which I was not altogether a stranger.

One of the foremost men in the annals of politeness and gallantry, at the court of Louis XVI., was undoubtedly Count Louis de Narbonne. Some persons had been pleased to increase his celebrity, by deducing, from the striking resemblance of his features to Louis XVI., an inference implying some august mystery as to his birth. He had also himself contributed to establish his reputation by his very great amiability, his intimate *liaison* with the most extraordinary woman of the age, Madame de Staël, and, in short, by the easy and chivalrous manner in which he had exercised, in the war department, a constitutional ministry in the decline of the monarchy. Forced to emigrate, and exposed to the shafts of the ultra-republicans, and of the ultra-royalists, he was at first neglected upon his re-entering France ; at a later period, however, I gave him a reception full of that warmth with which the patriots of 1789, who had a wish to conciliate royalty with liberty, had inspired me. To accomplished manners he joined a brilliant and ready wit, and often even a correctness and depth of observation. At length he was with me daily ; and such was the charm of his conversation, that it afforded me, in the midst of the most fatiguing labours, the pleasantest relaxation. All that M. de Narbonne requested of me, on behalf of his friends and connections, I granted him. I spoke of him to the emperor ; I had some difficulty in overcoming his repugnance to him ; he disliked his former connection with Madame de Staël, whom Napoleon regarded as an implacable enemy. I however, persisted, and the emperor at length allowed him to be presented. Napoleon was immediately struck with him,

and first attached him to his person as *officer d'ordonnance.*[1] General Narbonne followed him in the campaign of Austria, during which he was appointed governor of Trieste, with a political mission, of which I had intelligence.

Upon the emperor's return, and when the affair of the marriage was brought on the *tapis*, I named him as the fittest person for adroitly sounding the intentions of the court of Austria. It would have been contrary to all propriety and custom for Napoleon to have taken any decided step, before he knew positively the determination of the Emperor Alexander; therefore, the instructions delivered to the Count de Narbonne merely authorized him to act in his own name, and, as a private individual, with all the delicacy and ability requisite in an affair of such high importance. He arrived at Vienna in the month of January (1810), his only apparent object being to visit it, on his way back to France, through Germany. There, opening his batteries, he first saw M. de Metternich, and was afterwards introduced to the Emperor Francis.

The question of the marriage, at that time, occupied all Europe, and naturally became one of the subjects of his conversation with the Emperor of Austria. M. de Narbonne did not fail to observe, that the greatest sovereigns of Europe courted the alliance of Napoleon. The Emperor of Austria immediately expressed his surprise that the court of the Tuileries had overlooked his family, and he spoke openly enough to enable M. de Narbonne to know what to think. He wrote to me the same day, and in communicating to me the hints of the court of Vienna, said that he thought he might conclude from them, that an alliance with an archduchess would enter into the views of Austria. Upon the arrival of the courier, I immediately hastened to communicate his despatch to the emperor. I never saw him so joyous and happy. He caused Prince Schwartzenberg, the

[1] A sort of confidential aide-de-camp, whose office is to carry messages —*English Editor.*

Austrian ambassador, to be sounded; directing that this delicate negotiation should be conducted with such circumspection, that the ambassador should find himself engaged without being so himself. The object was, not to offend the Emperor Alexander by giving him room to suspect that a double negotiation had been set on foot, and, at the same time, to make all Europe suppose that the emperor had had the choice of a grand duchess and an archduchess; for as to the princess of Saxony, she had been mentioned as a mere matter of form.

On the 1st of February, Napoleon summoned at the Tuileries a grand privy council, composed of the high dignitaries, great officers, all the ministers, the presidents of the senate and the legislative corps, and those of the sections of the council of state. We were in all twenty-five persons. The council being assembled, and the deliberations begun, the minister Champagny first communicated the despatches of Caulaincourt, our ambassador in Russia. From his representation, it appeared, that the marriage with a Russian princess solely depended upon our allowing her the public exercise of her worship, and permitting, for her use, the erection of a chapel of the Greek ritual. He then made known the hints and desires of the court of Vienna: thus the choice seemed the only difficulty. Opinions were divided. As I was in the secret, I abstained from giving mine; and purposely withdrew before the end of the deliberation. Upon the council breaking up, Prince Eugene was commissioned by the emperor to make formal overtures to the Prince of Schwartzenberg. The ambassador had received his instructions, and all was arranged without the least difficulty.

Thus Napoleon's marriage with Maria Louisa was proposed, discussed, determined upon in council, and stipulated within twenty-four hours.

The day after the holding of the council, a senator, one of

my friends, always *au fait* at news,[1] came to inform me that the emperor had decided for an archduchess ; I affected surprise, and at the same time regret that a Russian princess had not been chosen. "If this be the case," cried I, "I must pack up ! " availing myself thus of a pretext to give my friends a hint of my approaching disgrace.

Gifted with what is called tact, I had a secret presentiment that my ministerial power would not long survive the new order of things, which would, doubtless, effect a change in the habits and character of Napoleon. I did not in the least doubt that, having become the ally of the house of Lorraine, and believing himself henceforth certain of the cabinet of Austria, and, consequently, of having it in his power to subject ancient Europe to his will, he would think himself in a situation to get rid of his minister of police, as had already been the case after the peace of Amiens. I was also firmly convinced that he would never pardon my having of myself raised an army, forced the English to re-embark, and saved Belgium ; I knew, in fact, that since that time my intimacy with Bernadotte had been an object of suspicion with him. The more he endeavoured to keep within himself his unfavourable feelings towards me, the more I suspected them. They discovered themselves, upon my proposing to him to set at liberty, on the approaching occasion of the celebration of his nuptials, a part of the prisoners of state, at the same time relieving others from *surveillance*. Instead of complying with my wish, he exclaimed, with an affectation of humanity, against the deplorable despotism exercised by the police, telling me that he thought of putting an end to it. Two days afterwards he sent me the draught of a report, drawn up in my name, and of an imperial decree, which, instead of one state prison, established six [2] ; ordering

[1] A *recueil* of anecdotes, in which this circumstance is related, mentions M. de Sémonville as the person; but Fouché suppresses the name.—*Note of the Editor.*

[2] Vincennes, Saumur, Ham, Landskaone, Pierre-Châtel, and Fenestrelle.—*Note of the Editor.*

besides, that henceforth no one could be arrested but in virtue of a decision of the privy council. This was a bitter derision, the privy council being nothing else than the will of the emperor. The whole was so artfully managed, that I was compelled to present the project to the council of state, where it was discussed and finally adopted on the 3rd of March. In this manner did Napoleon elude putting an end to illegal arrests, and threw upon the police all the odium of arbitrary detentions. He also requested me to give him a list of individuals under *surveillance*. *Surveillance* was a very mild police measure, which I had invented merely to relieve from the severities of arbitrary detention the numerous victims daily hunted down by hired accusers, whom I had great difficulty to keep within any bounds. This odious and secret militia was inherent in a system raised and maintained by the most suspicious and mistrustful man that perhaps ever existed. It was one of the state wounds. I had sometimes the weakness to imagine that, once firmly established and at ease, Napoleon would adopt a system of government more paternal, and, at the same time, more in harmony with our manners. Under this point of view, the marriage with an archduchess gave me hopes; but I felt more and more that the sanction of a general peace was indispensable. Could I not myself contribute to this peace, as I had co-operated, by my impulse, to the dissolution of a sterile marriage and to the alliance with Austria? If I succeeded in this object, I might, from the importance of such a service, conquer the prejudices of the emperor, and regain his confidence; but England was first to be sounded. I had the less hesitation, that the change, which had taken place in the composition of the English ministry, gave me some just grounds of hope.

The bad success of most of its operations, in this last campaign, had excited the displeasure of the English nation, and produced serious dissensions among the ministers. Two among them, Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, had even

gone so far as to fight a duel, after having sent in their resignations. The cabinet had hastened to recall from the Spanish embassy the Marquess Wellesley, to succeed Mr. Canning in the place of secretary of state for foreign affairs; and to place at the head of the war-department Earl Liverpool, formerly Lord Hawkesbury. I knew that these two ministers indulged lofty but conciliatory views. Besides, the cause of Spanish independence being almost desperate, in consequence of the victory of Ocanna and the occupation of Andalusia, I imagined that I should find the Marquess Wellesley more open to reasonable overtures; I, therefore, determined to feel the ground, and that, in virtue of the powers which I had frequently used, of sending agents abroad.

In this mission I employed M. Ouvrard, for two reasons: first, because a political overture could scarcely be begun in London except under the mask of commercial operations; and next, because it was impossible to employ, in so delicate an affair, a man more broken to business, or of a more insinuating and persuasive character. But, as M. Ouvrard could not, without some difficulty, enter into direct relations with the Marquess Wellesley, I associated with him M. Fagan, once an Irish officer, who, being intrusted with the first step, was to open to him, so to speak, the way to the British minister.

I determined that M. Ouvrard should not set off till after the celebration of the marriage. The entry of the young archduchess into Paris took place on the 1st of April; nothing could be more magnificent or more interesting. The day was beautiful! The expression of joy from the prodigious crowds assembled was rapturous. The court immediately set off for St. Cloud, where the civil act was gone through, and the next day the nuptial benediction was given to Napoleon and Maria Louisa, in one of the saloons of the Louvre, amid numbers of ladies in the richest attire. The fêtes were splendid. But that which was given by Prince Schwartzenberg, in the name of his master, offered a

sinister omen. The dancing-room, built in the garden of his hotel, took fire, and in an instant the saloon was in a blaze ; many persons perished, among others, the princess of Schwartzenberg, wife to the ambassador's brother. The unfortunate conclusion of this fête, given to celebrate the alliance of two nations, did not fail to be compared to the catastrophe which had marked the fêtes on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XVI. and Maria Antoinette ; the most unfortunate presages were drawn from it. Napoleon himself was struck with it. As I had given the prefecture all the requisite orders, and as that office had been specially charged with this part of the public police, it was upon that, or at least upon the prefect of police, that the emperor's resentment fell. Dubois was discharged, and, unfortunately, a public disaster was necessary in order to get rid of a man who had so often misdirected the moral end of the police.

At court, and in the town, the order of the day was henceforth to please the young empress, who, without a rival, captivated Napoleon. It was even on his side a kind of childishness. I knew they were watching for an opportunity to find the police at fault, touching the sale of certain works upon the revolution, which might have hurt the empress. I gave orders for their seizure [1] ; but such was

[1] The police, in virtue of an order from the Duke of Otranto, made the most severe search, forbade and seized all works upon the revolution which were written with a bias towards royalty. The editor of *Irma*, having published a large portion of those works which recalled to the memory of the French the royal family of the Bourbons, was the chief object of the inquisitorial visits of the police. Thus, this last search in his warehouses continued for two days ; almost all his books were confiscated, he was himself seized and conducted to the prefecture. One work only was partly the cause of this excessive severity ; it had been published a long time ; it was the history of the iniquitous trials of Louis XVI., the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and the Duke of Orleans. The work contained passages of the highest importance, such as secret interrogatories, secret declarations, decrees, and other unknown pieces, extracted from the journals of the revolutionary tribunals, and which had never seen the light. This work alone cost the editor more than thirty domiciliary visits without their being ever able to seize the whole edition ; only some isolated copies being taken. In spite of all these searches and visits, the work was constantly sold, and people hid themselves to read it.—*Note of the Editor.*

the cupidity of the agents of the prefecture, that these very works were clandestinely sold by those even whose duty it was to send them to the mill. Towards the end of April, the emperor set off with the empress to visit Middlebourg and Flessingue; he also went to Breda. This journey was fatal to me. The emperor, struck with my reflections upon the necessity of a general peace, had endeavoured, without my knowledge, to open secret negotiations with the new English minister, through the medium of a commercial house at Amsterdam. From this resulted a double negotiation and twofold proposals, which surprised the Marquess Wellesley extremely. Both the emperor's agents and mine, being equally suspected, were sent away. The emperor, surprised at so sudden and unexpected a conclusion, in order to discover the cause, employed his secret foreign agents and counter-police. At first, he obtained vague informations; but he was soon enabled to judge that his negotiation had been crossed by other agents, whose mission he was unacquainted with. His suspicions at first fell on M. de Talleyrand; but, upon his return, having received fresh informations, and having ordered a circumstanced report to be made, he discovered that M. Ouvrard had made overtures, without his knowledge, to the Marquess Wellesley; and, as M. Ouvrard was known to be connected with me, it was inferred that I had given him instructions. On the 2nd of June, being at St. Cloud, the emperor asked me in full council, what M. Ouvrard had gone to England for? "To ascertain for me the sentiments of the new ministry relative to peace, in conformity to the idea I had the honour to submit to your majesty before your marriage." "So," replied the emperor, "you make war and peace without my being a party." He left the council, and gave orders to Savary to arrest M. Ouvrard, and to conduct him to Vincennes; at the same time, I was forbidden to have any communication with the prisoner. The next day, the portfolio of the police was given to Savary. This time, it was a real disgrace.

I should certainly have made a prediction rather premature, by recalling the words of the prophet: "In forty days, Nineveh shall be destroyed;" but I might have predicted, with confidence, that in less than four years the empire of Napoleon would no longer exist.

PART II.

I IMPOSE upon myself a great and weighty task, in again offering myself to all the severity of a public investigation ; but I impose it on myself as a duty, to destroy the prejudices of party spirit, and the impression of hatred. I have, however, little hope that the voice of reason will have strength enough to make itself heard in the midst of the clamours of the two violent factions which divide the political world. No matter ; it is not for the present moment that I write, but for that of a more tranquil period. As to what concerns the present, let my destiny be accomplished ? And what a destiny, just heaven ! What have I left of such grandeur and of that enormous power, which I never abused, except for the purpose of avoiding still greater evils ? That which I least value, that which I accumulated for others, indeed remains to me, who, with the simplicity of my tastes, could have dispensed with wealth altogether ; to me, who, in the midst of splendour, always showed the moderation of a philosopher, and the sobriety of a hermit. By turns powerful, dreaded or disgraced, I sought for authority I own, but I detested oppression. What services have I not rendered ? What tears have I not dried ? Dare, if you can, to deny it, ye whose good opinion I succeeded in gaining, notwithstanding the dreadful events that had passed ! Did I not become your protector ? Did I not guard you against your own resentments, and the impetuous passions of the chief of

the state? I confess that there never was a more absolute police than that whose sceptre I held; but did you not admit that there never was one more protecting under a military government; more adverse to violence; more gentle in the means with which it penetrated into the secret recesses of domestic life, and whose action was less obnoxiously obvious? Did you not say, then, that the Duke of Otranto was, beyond a doubt, the ablest and the most moderate of all Napoleon's ministers? You hold a different language—for this sole reason: that times have changed. You form your opinion of the past by the present! I do not judge it so. I have committed errors, I own; but the good I have done must be taken in the account. Plunged in the chaos of public affairs, occupied with the unravelling of all kinds of intrigues, I took pleasure in calming hostilities, in extinguishing passions, and conciliating men. It was with a degree of luxury that I sometimes tasted repose in the bosom of my domestic affections, which, in their turn, were poisoned. In my recent disgrace, and in my great misfortunes, can I forget that the supporter and guardian of an immense empire, my sole disapprobation put it in peril, and that it fell down the moment I ceased to support it with my hand? Can I forget, that if, by the effect of a great reaction, and of a return which I had foreseen, I again repossessed myself of the scattered elements of so much greatness and power, the whole vanished like a dream? Yet, nevertheless, I was considered as far superior, in consequence of my long experience—I may add, perhaps, of my sagacity—to all those who, during the catastrophe, suffered the power to escape.

Now that, undeceived upon all points, I look down from a superior region upon all the miseries and fallacious splendours of greatness; now that I no longer contend for any object but the justification of my political intentions, I recognize, too late, the emptiness of those contrary parties who struggle for the government of the universe. I see and

feel that a more powerful First Mover modifies and guides them, in spite of all our deepest speculations.

It is, nevertheless, but too true, that the wounds of ambition are incurable. In spite of my reason, and in spite of myself, I am pursued by the delusive chimeras of power, by the phantoms of vanity ; I am as strongly tied to them as Ixion was to his wheel. A deep and painful feeling oppresses my mind.

And will it be said now that I do not show all my weaknesses, all my errors, and all my repentance ? A confession like this, I should think, is a sufficient pledge of the sincerity of my revelations. That pledge I owed to the importance of this second part of the memoirs of my political life ; I am thus irrevocably placed under the rigorous obligations of retracing all its peculiarities, of unfolding all its secret mysteries. This is my last labour. I shall, however, experience some compensating enjoyment in the charms of reflection, and in the fragrance of a certain number of recollections ; this pleasure I have experienced in my first narrative.

In preparing these memoirs, one consoling idea has never abandoned me. I shall not entirely descend into the grave, perhaps, into that grave which already yawns to receive me, at the termination of my exile. I cannot dissemble it from myself. However I may elude the decay of my spirit, I have but too strong conviction of the decay of my bodily strength. Pressed by the fates, I must hasten to offer, with sincere feelings, the account of the events which passed between my disgrace in 1810 and my fall in 1815. The complement is the most serious and the most thorny of all my political confessions. How numerous are the incidents, the mighty interests, the conspicuous characters, and the turpitudes which are associated with this last scene of a transitory power ! But fear nothing, enemies or friends ; the police is not going to denounce here—it is history which reveals.

But, if I pretend to place myself above frivolous considerations and regards in sparing no one, I am as firmly determined to keep as far from satire and libelling as from falsehood and dissimulation. I will brand with disgrace that which must be despised, I will respect whatever is deserving of respect. In a word, I will hold my pen with a firm hand; and, in order that it may not deviate, I will keep my eyes on the synchronism of public events.

From these preliminaries, intended to awaken attention and recall remembrances, I will proceed to the facts which confirm, to the particulars which reveal, and to those deeds which characterize. The result will, I hope, be a picture, to which the reader may give, as he pleases, either the name of history or materials for its composition.

At the end of the first part of these memoirs is the point whence I resume my narrative; it is marked by the event of my disgrace, which transferred the *porte feuille* of the high police of the State into the hands of Savary. It must not be forgotten that the empire was then in the zenith of its power, and that its military limits had no longer any bounds. Possessor of Germany, master of Italy, absolute ruler of France, invader of Spain, Napoleon was, moreover, the ally of the Cæsars, and of the autocrat of the north. So dazzling was the halo of his power, that the ulcer of the Spanish war, which was gnawing the vitals of the empire in the south, was forgotten. Everywhere else, Napoleon had only to desire, in order to obtain. All moral counterpoise had disappeared from his government. Everything gave way; his agents, his functionaries, his dignitaries, exhibited nothing but a group of flatterers and mutes, anxious to catch the least sign of his decisions. In short, he had just dismissed, in me, the only individual of his council who would have dared to check the long chain of his encroachments; in me, he had removed a zealous and watchful minister, who never spared him useful admonition, nor courageous reproof.

An imperial decree constituted me governor-general of

Rome.[1] But I never, for a single moment, thought that it was the emperor's wish that I should exercise so important a trust. This nomination was nothing but an honourable veil, woven by his policy, in order to conceal and mitigate, in the eyes of the public, my disgrace, of which his intimates alone had the secret. I could not be mistaken; the very choice of my successor was in itself a frightful omen. In every house, in every family, in short throughout Paris, there was a general horror manifested at seeing the general police of the empire thenceforth confounded with the military police of the chief magistrate; and, moreover, given up to the fanatical subserviency of a man who considered it as the greatest honour to execute the secret orders of his

[1] *Letter of the Emperor to the Duke of Otranto.*

"MY LORD DUKE OF OTRANTO,—The services which you have rendered us, in the difficult circumstances which have occurred, induce us to confide to you the government of Rome, until we have provided for the execution of article eight of the act of the constitution of the 17th of last February. We have determined, by a special decree, the extraordinary powers with which the particular circumstances, in which that department is at present placed, require that you should be invested. We expect that you will continue, in your new post, to give us proofs of your zeal for our service and attachment for our person.

"This letter having no other object, we pray God, my Lord Duke of Otranto, to take you into His holy keeping.

"(Signed) NAPOLEON.

"*St. Cloud, the 3rd of June*, 1810."

Letter of the Minister of General Police to S. M., I., and R.

"SIRE,—I accept the government of Rome to which your Majesty has had the goodness to raise me, as a recompence for the humble services which I have been so fortunate as to render you.

"I must not, however, dissemble, that I experience a very poignant regret in quitting your Majesty; I lose at once the happiness and instruction which I daily derived from my interviews with you.

"If anything can mitigate that regret, it is the reflection that I give in this circumstance, by my absolute resignation to the will of your Majesty, the strongest testimony of my boundless devotion to your person.

"I am, with the most profound respect,

"Sire,

"Your Majesty's very humble and

"Most obedient servant, and

"Faithful subject,

"(Signed) DUKE of OTRANTO.

"*Paris, June 3rd*, 1810." —*Note by the French Editor.*

master. His name alone created a universal suspicion, a kind of stupor, the impression of which was, perhaps, carried too far.

I no longer communicated, except under extreme precaution, with my intimate friends and private agents. I soon obtained the confirmation of all I had foreseen. For several days, my wife's apartments were crowded with distinguished visitors, who carefully masked the object of their visits under the appearance of paying their congratulations on the subject of the imperial decree which raised me to the government-general of Rome. I received the confidential testimonies of crowds of exalted personages, who, while expressing their regrets, assured me that my retreat carried with it the disapprobation of all such men as were most esteemed in all opinions and all ranks of society. "We are not indeed satisfied," said they, "whether the regret of the Faubourg Saint Germain be not, at least, as deep as that displayed by the multitude of eminent men, who have at heart the interests of the revolution." Testimonials of this kind, offered to a fallen minister, were neither suspicious nor doubtful.

My position and propriety imposed upon me the disagreeable task of acting for several days the part of Savary's mentor, during the *début* of his ministerial noviciate. It may easily be supposed, that I did not carry good nature so far as to initiate him in the upper mysteries of the political police. I took care not to give him a key, which might one day contribute to our common safety. Neither did I initiate him in the rather difficult art of arranging the secret bulletin, the ideas, and often even the writing of which must be left to the minister alone. The poor talents of Savary, in this walk, were already known to me; I had previously obtained, without his being aware of it, copies of the bulletins of his counter-police. What villainies did they not contain! To confess the truth, I was so out of patience with his perpetual questions, and heavy conceitedness, that

I amused myself with talking nonsense to him [1] (*conter des sornettes*).

By way of amends, I pretended to acquaint him with the forms, the customs, and the traditions of the ministry; I particularly magnified the profound views of the three councillors of state, who, under his direction, would each of them work as much as four in administering the police of France, which they would divide among themselves. He was quite dazzled. I introduced, and sincerely recommended to him the principal agents and clerks whom I had had under my orders. He only received well the treasurer, a little round personage, and the little inquisitor, Desmarets, on whom I never placed any reliance. This latter individual, endowed with a certain degree of tact, had instinctively bowed to the rising sun. He was completely Savary's right hand (*cheville ouvrière*).

Nothing in the world was ever more ludicrous than to see this soldier-like minister giving his audiences, *spelling* the list of those who solicited, drawn up by the *Huissiers* [2] of the chamber, with notes written by Desmarets in the margin. It was his guide (*guide-âne*) for promises and refusals, which were almost always accompanied by oaths or invectives. I had not failed to tell him that I had disobliged the emperor by being *trop bon*; and that to watch over his master's valuable days with more efficacy, he ought sometimes to make a show of resistance.[3]

[1] It was, doubtless, this circumstance, which since occasioned the Duke de Rovigo, in referring to Fouché, to say, "That personage has imposed upon us often enough!" It must be, however, understood that this phrase, as we have heard it quoted in society, comprises all the Imperial government.—*Note by the French Editor.*

[2] *Huissiers* are a sort of *Vergers*, whose office it is to introduce visitors, and people in general, calling on business. They previously write down the names of such persons, and, presenting the list to the ministers or high official personages, are instructed to give or refuse admittance accordingly. —*English Editor.*

[3] This would be going much too far for any other individual but Fouché, by nature revengeful, and indulging towards the Duke de Rovigo a hatred, the evidences of which he suffers too conspicuously to transpire.—*Note by the French Editor.*

Puffed up by an insolent self-conceit, he affected, from the first moment of his accession to office, to imitate his master in his frequent fits of passion, and his broken and incoherent phrases. He considered that there was nothing of any utility in the whole police, but secret reports, *espionnage*, and the money-chest. I had the good fortune to witness his gambols and fits of joy, on the day I put in his hands the agreeable calculation of all the budgets which were merged in the private chest ; *it appeared* to him like a new wonderful lamp.

I burnt with impatience to get rid of this ministerial pedagogueship ; but on the other hand, I resorted to pretexts in order to prolong my stay in Paris. Ostensibly, I carried on my preparations for my departure for Rome, as if I had never for a moment doubted that I was about to be installed there. The whole of my household was arranged upon the scale of a governor-generalship, and even my equipages were superinscribed in large characters, "*Equipages of the Governor-general of Rome.*" Informed that all my proceedings were watched, I paid great attention to little things.

At length, receiving neither decision nor instructions from court, I requested Berthier to obtain my audience of leave from the emperor. The only reply I got was, that the emperor had not appointed a day for my audience, and that it would be prudent, in consequence of the popular gossip, for me to go to my country-seat, and there await the orders that would be immediately sent me. I accordingly went to my *château de Ferrières*,[1] but not without indulging in the

[1] The *château de Ferrières* is distant about three-quarters of a league from the estate of Pont Carré, emigrant landed property, about six leagues from Paris, which Fouché had acquired from the state, but for which it is asserted that he had paid the full value to the proprietor. The *château* of Pont Carré being then in a dilapidated state, it would seem that Fouché caused it to be demolished, and devoted its site to pasture land. Ferrières and Pont Carré, united with immense wooded estates, which are now attached to them, constitute, according to report, one of the most magnificent domains in the kingdom; it comprises an extent of four leagues. It was to

venial malice of causing it to be inserted in the Paris journals, by underhand means, that I had set out for my new government.[1]

In my last interview with Berthier, I had not found much difficulty in detecting the emperor's inclinations towards me; I saw how vexed he was in finding public opinion decidedly pronounced against my dismissal, and as strongly declared against my successor. The ministry of the police then appeared to be nothing else than a Prevôté and Gendarmerie. All these indications confirmed me in the opinion that I should, with great difficulty, escape the consequences of an actual fall.

In fact, I had scarcely arrived at Ferrières, when a relation of my wife, who had secretly quitted Paris, hastened to me, at midnight, to convey the important intelligence that I should be arrested on the following day, and that my papers would be seized. Although the particulars were magnified, the information was positive; it came from an individual attached to the emperor's private cabinet, and long engaged in my interest. I immediately went to work, and put in a secure place all my most important papers. As soon as the operation was completed, I resigned myself with stoical fortitude to whatever might occur; and at eight o'clock my confidential emissary J—— arrived, having galloped all the way, with a letter from Madame de V—— in a feigned hand, informing me that Savary had just told the emperor that I had carried off his secret correspondence and confidential orders to Ferrières. I saw, at once, from whom Madame de V—— obtained her information. It confirmed the first intelligence, but the papers now appeared to be the only thing thought of. Although I had no longer any

the *château de Ferrières* that Fouché retired immediately after his disgrace, and subsequently after his return from his senatorship at Aix, as will be seen in the progress of these Memoirs.—*Note by the French Editor.*

[1] The author almost always neglects dates. We believe that it was on the 26th of June, 1810.—*Note by the French Editor.*

apprehension as to their offering violence to my person, I was picturing to myself the arrival of the chief *Sbire* and his archers, when my people informed me that a carriage, preceded by outriders, was entering the court of the *château*. But Napoleon, restrained, I presume, by some remains of decency, had spared me the mortification of coming in contact with his police minister. It was Berthier who entered my apartment, followed by the councillors of state Réal and Dubois.

From their embarrassment, I could see that I still kept them in awe, and that their mission was conditional. In fact, Berthier, commencing the business, told me, with some constraint, that he came by the emperor's orders to demand his correspondence; that he imperiously insisted upon it; and that, if I refused, the police prefect, Dubois, who was present, had orders to arrest me, and place a seal on my papers. Réal, assuming a tone of persuasion, and addressing me with more feeling, as an old friend, begged of me, nearly with tears in his eyes, to submit to the emperor's wishes. "I," said I, calmly, "I resist the emperor's wishes? how can you think of it? I, who have always served the emperor with so great a degree of zeal, although wounded by his unjust suspicions, even at those times when I served him most effectually. Come into my closet; search everywhere, gentlemen; I will give my keys into your hands; I will myself put you in possession of all my papers. It is lucky for me that the emperor has put me to this unexpected trial, out of which it is impossible I should not come with advantage. The rigorous examination of all my papers, and my correspondence, will give the emperor means of convincing himself of the injustice of the suspicions with which the malice of my enemies alone could have inspired him against the most devoted of his servants, and the most faithful of his ministers." The calmness and firmness which I had assumed, while making this short harangue, produced its effect, and I proceeded in these words: "As to the private corre-

spondence of the emperor with me during the exercise of my functions, as it was of a nature which required its being buried in eternal secrecy, I partly burned it, when I resigned my office, not wishing to expose papers of so great an importance to the chances of an indiscreet investigation. As to the rest, gentlemen, you will still find, with this exception, the papers which the emperor requires ; they are, I believe, in two locked and ticketed boxes ; you will have no difficulty in recognising them, nor will you be likely to confound them with my private papers, which I give up with the same confidence to your research. Once more, I fear nothing, and have nothing to fear from such a trial."

The commissioners overwhelmed me with protestations and excuses. They proceeded to examine my papers, or rather I examined them myself, in the presence of Dubois. I must do this justice to Dubois, that although he was my personal enemy, and more especially charged with the execution of the emperor's orders, he conducted himself with as much reserve as decorum ; whether it was that he already had a presentiment that his own disgrace would shortly follow mine,[1] or whether he judged it prudent not to disgust too much a minister who, after two falls, might again reascend the pinnacle of power.

Moved, probably, by my sincerity,[2] the imperial commissioners contented themselves with some insignificant papers, which I was pleased to let them have ; finally, after the customary forms of politeness, Berthier, Réal, and Dubois re-entered their carriage, and returned to Paris.

At the close of night, making my exit by the little gate in my park, I got into the *cabriolet* of my *homme d'affaires*, and, accompanied by a friend, hurried to Paris, where I

[1] M. the Count Dubois was succeeded by M. Pasquier, in his functions of prefect of police, on the 14th of October, 1810. Fouché has intimated one of the motives of his disgrace, in the first part of his memoirs.—*Note by the French Editor.*

[2] The word *openness* (*candeur*) was underlined in the original notes.—*Note of the French Editor.*

alighted *incognito* at my mansion in the *Rue du Bac*. There I learnt, two hours afterwards (for all my strings were laid out), that the emperor, on the report of what had passed at Ferrières, had fallen into a violent passion; that after having broken out in threats against me, he had exclaimed that I had played off a trick upon the commissioners; that they were fools; and that Berthier was, in regard to state affairs, no better than an old woman, who had suffered himself to be mystified by the craftiest man in the empire.

The next day, at nine o'clock in the morning, having concerted my plan, I hastened to St. Cloud, and there presented myself to the grand *maréchal* of the palace. "Here I am," said I to Duroc; "it is of the greatest consequence for me to see the emperor instantly, and to prove to him, that I am very far from deserving his cruel mistrust, and unjust suspicion. Tell him, I entreat you, that I am waiting in your closet, till he deigns to grant me a few minutes' audience." "I will go instantly," replied Duroc, "and I am very glad to see that you have cooled a little (*que vous mettiez de l'eau dans votre vin*)." Such was the exact phrase he used, and it squared with the idea which I wished to give him of my step. Duroc, returning, took me by the hand, led me forward, and left me in the emperor's closet. From the first aspect and deportment of Napoleon, I guessed what was passing in his mind. Without giving me time to say a single word, he embraced me, flattered me, and went even so far as to testify a kind of repentance for the dissatisfaction he had expressed with regard to me; then, with an accent which seemed to say that he himself offered me a pledge of reconciliation, he concluded by requiring, and, in short, demanding his correspondence, "Sire," I replied, with a firm voice, "I have burnt it." "That is not true; I must have it," replied he, with compressed vehemence and anger. "It is reduced to ashes." "Withdraw!" These words were pronounced with a motion of the head, and a terrible look. "But, Sire——" "Withdraw, I say!" This was repeated

with such emphasis, as to dissuade me from staying. I held ready in my hand a brief memorial, which I laid on the table as I retired; an action which I accompanied with a respectful bow. The emperor, bursting with anger, seized the paper, and tore it to pieces.

Duroc, who saw me so soon returning, perceiving neither trouble nor emotion depicted in my appearance, imagined that I was restored to favour. "You have come off well," said he; "I prevented the emperor yesterday from having you arrested." "You have saved him," I returned, "from committing an act of folly,—an act which, at all events, had been impolitic, and which had furnished matter to malignity. The emperor, by such an action, would have thrown alarm among those individuals who are most devoted to the interests of his government." I perceived from Duroc's manner, that this was also his opinion, and taking him by the hand, I said, "Do not suffer yourself to be discouraged, Duroc; the emperor stands in need of your prudent counsel."

I quitted Saint Cloud, somewhat reassured by this half-confidence of the grand *maréchal*, for which I was indebted to a mistake; and returned, pondering on the posture of the affair, to my mansion.

I was about to return to Ferrières, after having despatched some urgent business, when the Prince de Neufchâtel (Berthier) was announced. "The emperor," said he, "is very angry. I never saw him in so violent a passion; he has taken it into his head, that you have played with us; that you have carried audacity so far, as to maintain, to his face, that you had burnt his letters, in order to avoid giving them up; he pretends that it is a punishable state offence, to persist in retaining them." "This suspicion," said I to Berthier, "is the most injurious of all. The correspondence of the emperor would, on the contrary, be my only safeguard, and, if I possessed it, I would not give it up." Berthier urgently implored me to yield; but finding me silent, he concluded by threats in the emperor's name. "Go to him,"

I replied, "and tell him, that I have been accustomed for these five and twenty years to sleep with my head on the scaffold; that I know the extent of his power, but that I do not fear it; and add, that if he wishes to make a Strafford of me, he is the master." We then separated; I more than ever resolved to stand firm, and scrupulously retain the undeniable proofs that all which was most violent and iniquitous in the exercise of my ministerial functions had been imperiously prescribed, by orders emanating from the cabinet, and invested with the sign manual of the emperor.

Neither was it the effect of public disgrace, which I so much feared, as ambuscades prepared against me in darkness. Determined by my own reflections, as well as the entreaties of my friends and of all I held most dear, I threw myself into a post-chaise, taking with me only my eldest son and his tutor. I then took the road to Lyon; there I found my old secretary, Maillocheau, general commissary of police, who was indebted to me for his place; I obtained from him all the papers which I thought I might want, and rapidly traversed a great part of France. Thence, passing with the same celerity into Italy, I arrived at Florence with a boldly-conceived design, which I thought was calculated to secure me from the emperor's resentment. But such was the state of my physical irritability, and the excess of the fatigue with which so rapid and so long a journey had overwhelmed me, that it was necessary to give up two whole days to repose, before I could find myself in a proper condition to provide for my own safety.

It was not unintentionally, and this I will explain presently, that I had sought refuge in that classic land, beloved from time immemorial by gods and men. The beautiful and free Tuscany, which had at first fallen under the dominion of the Medicis, subsequently under the sceptre of the house of Austria, princes who had always governed it rather in the character of fathers than of king, was at that time plunged in the gulf of the French empire. I pass over the mock

cession made by Napoleon to the infant of Parma, under the title of King of Etruria, a cession revoked almost as soon as it was concluded. Tuscany was reserved for other destinies. Ever since 1807, Eliza, Napoleon's sister, reigned there under the title of grand duchess. And it was I, who through the most inconsistent and unaccountable vicissitudes, now came to place myself under the protection of a woman I disliked; who formerly giving strength to the coterie Fontanes and Molé, had contributed to my first disgrace; of that woman of whom I shall have to say, in this place, more in her favour than against her, in order to be just—for I have a habit of speaking and writing according to the associations of the epoch, but without passion or resentment. Such ought, in fact, to be the standing maxim of the statesman; the past ought in his eyes to appear in no other light than history; everything is comprised in the present.

When, besides, the question concerns females subjected to the influence of strong passions, it admits of an easy explanation. At my resumption of the ministry I had an opportunity to conciliate Eliza; I had successively protected two individuals Hin**** and Les******, to whom she was much attached, and who, within a short interval, had rendered themselves in the strongest degree necessary to her imperious inclinations. The one, a contractor, had been bitterly persecuted by the emperor; the other, more obscure, had plunged himself into a disgraceful transaction. It was not without difficulty that I succeeded in hushing the matter up.

I had, moreover, prevailed upon Napoleon, in 1805, to confer on his sister the sovereignty of Lucca and Piombino; I was, therefore, almost certain of still finding the heart of Eliza disposed to feelings of gratitude; and I had not neglected to make myself sure of it, on the very day when my disgrace was aggravated by my last interview with the emperor. Having presented myself to the grand duchess, who was then at Paris to attend the marriage fêtes, I had solicited from her, without entirely confiding to her all the thorny

points of my position, letters for her dominions, through which, as I told her, I was about to pass, in order to proceed to Rome. Eliza assented with infinite affability, warmly recommending me, and designating me in her letters by the amiable epithet of the *common friend.* This is easily explained. I had in Tuscany some friends, for whom I had procured very lucrative places, and the grand duchess gave them all the latitude I required to serve me. Such was the steadiness of their character, that I could, without risk, reveal to them all the difficulties of my situation.

The news which I received, nearly at the same time, from Paris, and from my family, which had stopped at Aix, brought nothing of a comforting description. On the contrary, they represented the emperor as urged by Savary, and inclined to break out into violence against my alleged obstinacy, which was termed indiscreet, and even mad. No one at that time could entertain the idea of a single individual daring to resist the will of him before whom all things, whether potentates or nations, bowed. "What!" wrote one of my friends to me, "would you be more powerful than the emperor?" My head turned, and I was in my turn intimidated. In my sleepless nights, and in my dreams, I imagined myself surrounded by executioners, and seemed as if I beheld, in the native country of Dante, the inexorable vision of his infernal gates. The spectre of tyranny depicted itself on my imagination with more frightful features than during the most sanguinary despotism of Robespierre, who had condemned me to the scaffold. Here I was less in dread of the scaffold than the *oubliettes.*[1] I knew, alas, but too well the man with whom I had to deal. My head becoming more and more heated, I returned to the first idea which had presented itself to my mind; and I took the desperate resolution

[1] This is an untranslatable word. The name was given to certain dungeons, underground, in which it is reported that state criminals, or more properly speaking, the victims of tyranny, were formerly cast, there to be left to die with hunger. It comes from *oubli*, forgetfulness—the persons there confined never being heard of.—*English Editor.*

of embarking for the United States, that common refuge of the unfortunate friends of liberty. Secure of Dubois,[1] director of police in the grand duchy, who was indebted to me for his place, I obtained blank passports; and proceeded to Leghorn, where I freighted a vessel, giving out that I was going by sea to Naples, whence I intended to proceed to Rome. I went on board; I even set sail fully determined to pass the straits, and cross the Atlantic. But, just heavens! to what a terrible affliction was my frail irritable habit of body subjected. A dreadful sea sickness attacked me with the greatest violence. Overcome by my sufferings, I began to regret that I had not attended to the remonstrances of my friends and family, whose future existence I was about to compromise. I nevertheless struggled on; and resisted as much as possible the idea of yielding to the tyrannical ruler. But I had already lost my senses, and was about to expire, when I was put on shore. Overwhelmed by this rough trial, I subsequently declined the offer of a generous English captain, who wished to convey me to his native island, on board of a commodious vessel and a good sailer, promising me at the same time such attention and antidotes as would secure me against the return of sea-sickness. I could not find resolution enough to comply. I was resolved to endure everything sooner than again trust myself to an element incompatible with my existence. This cruel trial had besides changed my ideas; I no longer saw objects under the same point of view. By degrees, I perceived that there was a possibility of coming to some kind of compromise with the emperor, whose rage pursued me even to the shores of the Tuscan Sea. I still wandered there for a short time, in order to mature my plan, and obtain opportunities for its realiza-

[1] This individual must not be confounded with Count Dubois, prefect of police. We have been informed that the Dubois, director of police in Tuscany, and M. Maillocheau, commissary general of police at Lyon, were severely reprimanded by the Duke of Rovigo, for having favoured the furtive journey of Fouché. The commissary general of Lyon was even cashiered.—*Note by the French Editor.*

tion. At length my resolution being taken, and my batteries prepared, I returned to Florence. There I wrote to Eliza, already well-disposed to do me service; I conveyed a letter to the emperor under cover to her, in which, without flattery or humiliation, I confessed that I was sorry for having displeased him; but, that being in dread of falling a defenceless victim to the malignity of my enemies, I had considered myself entitled, perhaps wrongfully, to retain possession of papers which composed my only guarantee. That, on reflection, and deeply regretting having incurred his displeasure, I had placed myself under the protection of a princess who, by the ties of blood, as well as by the goodness of her heart, was worthy of being his representative in Tuscany; that to her I consigned my interests, and that I entreated his majesty to grant me, under the auspices of the grand duchess, in exchange for the papers which I had determined to give up in compliance with his wish, some kind of *irresponsibility* for all the measures and acts which I might have executed by his orders, during the duration of my two ministries; that a pledge of this description, which was necessary to my security and repose, would be as a sacred Egis, which would defend me against the attacks of envy, and the shafts of malice; that I had already several reasons to believe that his majesty, out of regard to my zeal and services, would deign to re-open the only access which remained to his goodness and justice, by permitting me to retire to Aix, the chief place of my senatorship, and to reside there in the bosom of my family, till further orders.

This letter, sent by a special messenger to the grand duchess, had a full and entire effect; Eliza interested herself zealously. The courier's return announced to me that the Prince de Neufchâtel, vice-constable, was commissioned, by an express order from the emperor, to deliver to me a *motived* receipt in exchange for the correspondence and orders which the emperor had addressed to me during the exercise of my

functions, and that I might, with full security, retire to the chief place of my senatorship.

In this way, through the intervention of the grand duchess, was effected, not certainly a reconciliation between me and the emperor, but a kind of compromise, which I should have regarded as impracticable three weeks before. I was less indebted for it to inclination on my part, or sincere submission, than to the results of a sea-sickness, the tortures of which I was, from habit of body, incapable of supporting.

Restored to my family, I was at length enabled, at Aix, to enjoy the tranquillity so necessary to the decay of my strength and the state of my mind, which was irritated without being vanquished. It was not without a very painful inward struggle that I had consented to bend before the violence of the despot. If at length I decided upon yielding, it was only upon capitulation; but sacrifices such as these are not made without effort by any one who feels the native dignity of man; and who has no other wish than to live under a reasonable government. There were for me many other motives of bitterness and alarm, in contemplating the secret and hurried march of a power advancing to self-destruction, and the springs of which were so familiar to me, that their results could no longer escape the foresight of my calculations.

Although I had reason to believe myself condemned for a length of time to perfect obscurity and nullity, this mode of life, which might have conducted me to apathy and indifference, was very ill accordant with a mind broken in to the habits and exercise of great affairs. Those things which escaped others did not escape me; flashes of light escaped from the insipid and lying columns of the *Moniteur*, which attracted my notice. The cause of the events of the day was revealed to me by the very announcement of its result; I could always supply the truth in the place of those half hints and broken sentences contained in that paper; and the lucubrations of the chief magistrate alternately revealed to

me the joy and torments of his ambition. I penetrated the most secret actions, even the servile eagerness of his intimate partisans and most unshaken agents.

Nevertheless, I wanted to know the details; I was too far from the scene of action. How, for example, could I divine the sudden incidents, and the unforeseen accidents, which occurred out of the ordinary circle of things? There was always some commotion or some storm in the interior of the palace. If some scattered and broken rumours of these transpired, they seldom reached the extreme limits of the provinces without being altered or mutilated through ignorance or passion.

The inveterate custom of knowing everything pursued me; and I yielded the more easily to it, in the midst of the *ennui* of a tranquil and monotonous state of exile. By the assistance of steady friends and faithful emissaries, I arranged my secret correspondence, corroborated by regular bulletins, which, as they reached me from various quarters, might be reciprocally corroborated; in a word, I established my counter-police at Aix. This amusement, which was at first weekly, was repeated subsequently more than once a week, and I was informed of all that occurred in a more *piquante* manner than when I was at Paris. Such were the occupations of my retreat. There, surrounded by the calm atmosphere of reflection, my Parisian bulletins arrived in such a manner as to stimulate my political meditations. Oh! ever courageous, sprightly, and faithful V——; you who held almost all the threads of that network of information and truth; you who, endowed with superior sagacity and reason, and who, always active and calm, remained faithful, under all circumstances, to gratitude and friendship—accept the tribute of respect and tenderness, which my heart will ever feel the want of expressing, even to my last sigh. You were not, however, the only agent employed for the common interest, in weaving the patriotic web which had been preparing for more than a twelvemonth, to meet the

probable chance of a catastrophe.[1] The amiable and profound D——, the beautiful and alluring R——, seconded your noble zeal. You also had your knights of secret mystery enrolled under the banners of the hidden graces and virtues. It must be confessed, in the midst of social decomposition, whether under the reign of terror, or during the two directorial and imperial tyrannies, whom did we remark so capable of a rare disinterestedness as to devote themselves for the common good? Some women—What do I say?—a large number of women retained the generosity of their ideas, uninfected by that contagion of venality and baseness which degrades human nature and bastardizes nations.

Alas! we were at that time approaching, after many vicissitudes, the boundaries of that fatal cycle in which we had everything to deplore or fear as a nation; we were approaching that future which was the more appalling because it was near, and in which everything was likely to be compromised and made doubtful again; our fortune, our honour, our repose: we had been indebted for them, it is true, to the great man himself; but that extraordinary personage persevered, in spite of the lessons of all ages, in attempting to exercise a power without counterpoise and without control. Devoured by the fever of domination and conquest, raised to the pinnacle of human authority, it was no longer in his power to stop in his career.

Thanks to my correspondence and secret informations, I followed him step by step in his public proceedings as well as his private actions. If I did not lose sight of him, the reason was, that the whole empire was in him; the reason was, that all our power, all our fortune, resided in his fortune and his power; an alarming incorporation, no doubt, because it placed, at the mercy of a single man, not only one nation, but a hundred different nations.

[1] Fouché, in this place, only lifts a corner of the veil; what follows will apprize the reader of all which the ex-minister at present conceals.—*Note by the French Editor.*

Arrived at the zenith of his power, Napoleon did not even stop a moment ; it was during the two years which I passed far from affairs, that the germ of his decline, which was at first imperceptible, began to develop itself. On that account I thought, therefore, to advert, in this place, to the rapid effects of it, less for the sake of gratifying a vain curiosity, than of contributing to the utility of history. It will moreover be by means of this natural transition, that I shall be conducted, without leaving any gap, to my reappearance on the stage of the world, and my redirection of state affairs.

The year 1810, at first marked by the marriage of Napoleon and Maria Louisa, and afterwards by my disgrace, was also rendered remarkable by the disgrace of Pauline Borghese, the emperor's sister, and by the abdication of his brother Louis, King of Holland. Let us investigate these two events, in order to be better enabled to explain what followed.

Of the three sisters of Napoleon, Eliza, Caroline, and Pauline, the latter, who was celebrated for her beauty, was the one whom he most loved, without, however, suffering himself to be led by her. Giddy, whimsical, and fond of pleasure, without talent, but not without some quickness and a smattering of things, she delighted in splendour, in dissipation, and all kinds of flattery. She never hated any one except Leclerc, her first husband, and, still more, the most amiable of men, Prince Camille Borghese, to whom Napoleon had united her by her second marriage. Her first marriage was what is called a garrison marriage. Being taken ill, and refusing to follow Leclerc in his expedition to St. Domingo, she was carried by Napoleon's orders in a litter on board the admiral's ship.

Consumed by the burning heat of that tropical climate, and banished, in consequence of the unfortunate result of that expedition, to the island *De la Tortue*, she, in order to divert her mind, plunged into every species of sensuality. On the death of Leclerc, she hastened to take ship, not like

an Artemisia, nor like the wife of Britannicus, dissolved in tears, and embracing the funeral urn of her husband, but free, triumphant, and eager again to revel in all the luxuries of the capital. There, for a long while eaten up by a complaint, the seat of which is an accusing witness against incontinence, Pauline had recourse to all the treasures of Esculapius, and recovered. Strange effect of her miraculous cure ; far from impairing her beauty, it derived from it a greater degree of lustre and bloom, like some curious flowers which are brought to blossom by manure, and rendered more vivacious by the rottenness out of which they spring.

Desiring nothing but unrestrained and unlimited enjoyment, but dreading her brother and his rough severity, Pauline formed a project, in conjunction with one of her women, of subjecting Napoleon to the full dominion of her charms. She employed so much art, and so much refinement, for the purpose, that her triumph was complete. Such was the intoxication of the despot, that more than once his familiars heard him exclaiming, in the excess of his admiration, that his sister was the most beautiful of the beautiful, and in short, the Venus of the age. Her beauty, however, was only of a masculine description. But let us lay aside these scenes, which are more worthy of the pencil of Suetonius and Aretin, than of the pen of history. Voluptuous *château de Neuilly !* magnificent palace of the Faubourg St. Honoré ! if your walls, like those of the palaces of the kings of Babylon, could reveal the truth, what licentious scenes would you not depict in large characters.

For more than a year, the infatuation of the brother for the sister maintained its power, although unaccompanied by passion ; in fact, no other passion but that of dominion and conquest could master that haughty and warlike mind. When, after the battle of Wagram, and the peace of Vienna, Napoleon returned in triumph to Paris, preceded by the report of his approaching divorce with Josephine, he went that very day to his sister, who was in a state of agitation,

and the most anxious anticipation of his return. Never had she displayed so much love and adoration for her brother. I heard her say on that very day, for she was aware that there was no veil for me, "Why do we not rule in Egypt? We might then act like the Ptolomies; I might divorce my husband, and marry my brother." I knew she was too ignorant to have made such an allusion herself; I saw in it an ejaculation of Napoleon.

The bitter and concentrated disappointment which Pauline felt may be conceived, when, some months after that time, she saw Maria Louisa, adorned with all her innocence and candour, make her appearance at the nuptial ceremony, and take her seat on the throne, by the side of Napoleon. The imperial court then underwent a thorough reform in its habits, its morals, and its etiquette; the reform was complete and rigorous. From that moment, the licentious court of Pauline was deserted; and that woman, who united all the weaknesses to all the graces of her sex, considering Maria Louisa in the light of a fortunate rival, conceived a mortal jealousy against her, and nourished the most intense resentment in the recesses of her heart. Her health was impaired by it. By the advice of her physician, she had recourse to the waters of *Aix la Chapelle*, as well for the purpose of recovery, as for that of escaping the *ennui* to which she was a prey. Having undertaken her journey, she met, at Brussels, Napoleon and Maria Louisa, who were travelling towards the frontier of Holland. There, compelled to appear at the court of the new empress, and eagerly seizing an opportunity of insulting her as much as possible, she went so far as to make, behind her back, while she was passing through the *salon*, a sign with her two fingers, and that accompanied by an indecent tittering, which the common people apply, in their gross style of derision, to a credulous and deluded spouse. Napoleon, who witnessed and was shocked by this impertinence, which the reflection of the mirrors had even revealed to Maria Louisa, never

forgave his sister; she received, on that very day, an order to withdraw from court. From that time, disdaining submission, she preferred to live in exile and disgrace, till the events of 1814, when the misfortunes of her brother recalled her affections and devotedness.

The disgrace of Louis, King of Holland, was of a more dignified description.

Hitherto, the emperor had only persecuted and despoiled ancient dynasties, as if, by that means, he had really intended, according to his imprudent words, to make his own the most ancient in Europe. But now, as if nothing could restrain him, he went so far as to depose a king of his own race, whose brow he himself had bound with the royal diadem. It was asked whether in proclaiming his brother King of Holland, he only meant to make a prefect of him. Louis, who was of a mild disposition, and a friend to justice, beheld, with deep sorrow, the ruin of his kingdom, occasioned by the effect of that continental system which destroyed all industry and commerce. He secretly favoured a maritime trade, notwithstanding the threats of his brother, who called him by the name of smuggler. Enraged by seeing himself thus disobeyed, Napoleon prepared for the invasion of Holland, forgetting that he had told his brother, in calling him to the throne, and in order to conquer his repugnance, that it was much better to die a king than live a prince. Louis, finding he could not prevent the occupation of his states by the soldiers and custom-house officers of his brother, abdicated the crown in favour of his son, announcing his resolution, by a message, to the legislative body of Holland, in these terms: "My brother, although much exasperated against me, is not so against my children; he will certainly never destroy what he has erected for their sakes; he will not take away their inheritance, since he will never have occasion to complain of a child who cannot govern for himself. The queen, appointed to the regency, will do her utmost to conciliate the emperor, my brother.

She will be more fortunate than I, whose endeavours have never been crowned with success; and who can tell?—perhaps I may be the only impediment to a reconciliation between France and Holland. If that were the case, I should find some comfort in passing the remainder of a wandering and suffering life, far from the dearest objects of my warmest affection." An abdication like this was not undignified. The message was hardly delivered, when Louis secretly quitted Holland, and retired to Gratz, in Styria, in the Austrian states, having nothing more to live upon than a trifling pension. His wife Hortense, less disinterested, appropriated to herself the income of two millions which Napoleon decreed in favour of his dethroned brother.

This first example of Napoleonian abdication struck me, and made me reflect. Shall I confess the truth? it gave me the idea of the possibility of one day saving the empire, by means of an abdication imposed upon him who might, by his extravagance, compromise its prosperity. It will be seen in what manner this idea, which was at first confined to myself, was realized afterwards by other political heads.

It might be thought that the abdication of Louis would have disconcerted Napoleon. But was he not surrounded by men, incessantly occupied with the task of varnishing over his invasions and encroachments? Does any one want to know what was the rhetoric employed, upon this subject, by Champagny, Duc de Cadore, his minister for foreign affairs, successively promoted to the highest offices, and of whom Talleyrand had formed so accurate a judgment, when saying that he was a man fit for all places on the day previous to an appointment being made to them? This wise minister, then commenced by proving, in a jumble called a report, that as the abdication of the King of Holland could not be made without the consent of Napoleon, it was null, from that very circumstance, and of no effect. From this he deduced the marvellous inference (and this grand effort of logic was anticipated), that Holland ought to be considered

as a conquest, and reunited to the French empire; an inference which an *imperial decree* decided without appeal.

This event had a characteristic scene for its last act. Napoleon sent for the son of Louis, still a child, and whom he had created Grand Duc de Berg; and addressed him in the following short harangue: "Come to me, my son; the conduct of your father afflicts my heart: his disorder alone can explain it[1]; come to my arms; I will be your father; you shall lose nothing by the event; but never forget, in whatever situation my policy may place you, that your paramount duty is owing to me, and that all your duties towards the people committed to your care are subordinate." In this manner it was that Napoleon rent asunder the veil of so measureless an ambition, that he placed himself above the King of kings, and the sovereignty of all nations.

But let us now explain the true cause of the usurpation of Holland; I can do it here with the more propriety, as it is, in some degree, connected with my fall. When the marriage with an arch-duchess was resolved upon, Napoleon felt a wish for general pacification, which I endeavoured to change into a firm and determined purpose. I knew by my emissaries, that the cabinet of London insisted upon two decisive points; the independence of Holland, and of the Peninsula. With Louis, the maintenance of the separation of Holland might be depended upon. As to the Peninsula, Napoleon would consent to wave his pretensions to Portugal alone, because he met with nothing but obstacles in his endeavours to conquer it. I did not, however, despair of disgusting him with the occupation of Spain, which had already cost him so great an effusion of blood, and which was everything but secure. By his authority, I concerted with his brother Louis, during his residence in Paris, in 1810, a plan of secret and special negotiation with London. Louis

[1] This insinuation of Napoleon, against his brother, was calumnious. Louis was melancholy, and valetudinarian; but his sound and right-minded judgment was not affected by that circumstance.—*Note by the French Editor.*

wrote to his minister for foreign affairs, that Napoleon was so enraged against him and the English, in consequence of their clandestine trade with his dominions, that it would be impossible to prevent the forcible reunion of Holland with France, unless a maritime peace instantly took place, or, at least, unless changes in the British system of blockade, and orders of council, were effected. He authorized his minister to confer with his colleagues, on this head, but as if acting of their own accord in his absence, and to despatch to London an agent, who, being invested with a certain degree of consideration, might make overtures of negotiation in their private names. This agent was to be instructed, in the first instance, to point out to the cabinet of St. James' the immense disadvantage which would result to the commerce, and safety in coming from England, should Holland, by means of its union with the empire of Napoleon, become an instrument of aggression, in the hands of the latter; for he would, doubtless, take measures to preclude it from all commercial connection. The ministers of Louis chose for their agent, M. Labouchère, a banker of Amsterdam, who repaired to London, with instructions to set on foot, in conjunction with the Marquess Wellesley, a secret negotiation. He was more especially to insist on the necessity of making alterations in the execution of the orders of council of the month of November, 1807. But the Marquess Wellesley refused to enter into a detached negotiation on the subject of Holland, fully aware that its independence could only be ensured as long as it was Napoleon's pleasure, who, till then, had shown himself little disposed to recognize the rights of any of the nations placed under his influence. However, with a view to sound the real intentions of Napoleon, he authorized, about the same epoch (April, 1810), the English commissioner Mackenzie, then carrying on the negotiations, at Morlaix, relative to the exchange of prisoners, to open a negotiation for a maritime peace, which was to be concealed by the ostensible negotiation going on with the French

commissioner, appointed for the exchange.[1] The cabinet of St. James', through the organ of the commissioner Mackenzie, left to Napoleon his choice between three modes of treating, viz., 1st. The state of possession before hostilities : 2nd. The state of present possession : 3rd. Reciprocal compensation. But Napoleon, intoxicated by his prosperity, refused to listen to any of these modes of negotiation, rejecting every description of peace but that, the conditions of which he should prescribe.

From that moment the Marquess Wellesley refused to receive any overture from the banker Labouchère, and even from M. Fagan, whom I had commissioned to address him with the same view. The English ministry was too well persuaded of the efficacy of its system of blockade to accede to any modification in that respect. The negotiation, therefore, was irredeemably broken off ; and Napoleon, perceiving that he could not compel England to yield to his will, resolved, in the spirit of vengeance, to invade the kingdom of his brother, hoping, by that means, to withdraw Holland for ever from the influence of English commerce. At the same time, he conceived that he could no longer defer the disgrace of his minister of police, who incessantly laboured to bring him back to a reasonable system of administration and policy. He was the more induced to sacrifice me, that his private correspondents repeated, in reference to myself, and with certain London pamphleteers—"that he trembled before his own work, without having the courage to destroy it." He had been waiting for the opportunity for several months past. It has been seen[2] how uneasy he was respecting my connection with Bernadotte ; but, in this case, there appeared to him a more plausible motive for my disgrace. He pretended that, under pretext of negotiating on the subject of Holland, my agents at London had done nothing

[1] Le Marquis du Moutier, at this time ambassador from Charles X., in Switzerland.—*Note by the French Editor.*

[2] In the first part of these Memoirs.—*Note by the French Editor.*

but abandon themselves to intrigues and fraudulent speculations ; by that means seeking to make me responsible for the rupture of a negotiation, which had only failed through his insincerity and domineering spirit. Such were the true motives of the invasion of Holland, and of my disgrace, the accuracy of which I can guarantee.

This system of irreconciliation and violence was perpetuated by an imperial decree (October 19, 1810), the purport of which was, that all the English merchandises found in places subjected to the emperor's dominions, or conquered by his arms, should be publicly burnt. This was an appendix to the Berlin and Milan decrees, that is to say, that the same steps were to be taken at Amsterdam and Leghorn, as had already been taken at Berlin, Frankfort, Mayence, and Paris. If the observation could not here be made, that "*to burn was not to answer*," it could at least be said, that "*to burn was not to govern.*"

Such were the consequences of the continental system, which according to silly and dastardly councillors, was to conclude by putting England *hors de combat*, and delivering the whole world to Napoleon. And this incendiary idea, which became with him, in particular, a steadfast belief, was nothing but a political tradition, inherited by him from the directorial government, which the reporters, clubs, and newspapers had persuaded, that the only way to reduce England was to exclude her from the ports of the continent.

But in order to do this, it was first necessary to subjugate continental Europe, of which Napoleon did not yet possess more than one-third ; the rest languished under the government of the kings, his allies, friends, or tributaries. What was the tenor of the notes which the minister Champagny Cadore successively addressed to them, in order to persuade them to close their ports against all English vessels ! "That there was no longer any neutral territory for the European states ; that they should not carry on any commerce active or passive, on their own account, and that France alone, by

means of licenses, negotiated at London, would provide them with such goods as it was indispensable for them to receive." Such was the famous continental system, which tended to abolish the commerce of the world, and which on that very account was impracticable. But they had soon found it necessary to modify it, or rather to merge it in the system of licenses, invented by England.

Bonaparte himself was, therefore, observed, at the end of 1810, to impart a latitude to this system, by granting permission, for a given sum, to introduce into France a certain quantity of colonial produce; but on condition of exchanging it for goods of French manufacture, which were most frequently thrown into the sea on account of the difficulties raised by the English custom-house officers.

And who derived the greatest profit from this unheard-of monopoly? Undoubtedly not the subaltern speculators, nor the *rated* commissioners of the great speculator in chief, who were reduced to little more than a trifling commission. But the emperor's profit was clear and net. Every day he observed, with an excess of joy, which he did not disguise, the accumulation of the enormous treasure stored in the cellars of the Pavilion Marsan; they were completely encumbered with it. These treasures already amounted to near five hundred millions in specie (£20,000,000 [1]); it was a residue of the two milliards introduced into France by the effect of conquest. The desire of gold might thus have superseded eventually the desire of conquest in the mind of Napoleon, if the inexorable Nemesis had suffered him to grow old.

To form an idea of the accumulation of wealth identified with the development of this individual's power, we must add to the treasures concealed in the cellars of the Tuileries,

[1] The voluntary companions of the captive of St. Helena have since confirmed this disclosure; but they only compute the especial treasure of their idol in the best times at four hundred millions.—*Note by the French Editor.*

forty millions in movables, and four or five millions in plate, preserved in the imperial mansions; five hundred millions distributed under the name of *dotations* to the army; and, finally, the *domaine extraordinaire*, amounting to more than seven hundred millions, and which was unlimited, since it was composed of property, "which the emperor, exercising the right of peace and war, acquired by conquests and treaties." With such an indefinite text, it was impossible for anything to escape him. Already the funds of this *domaine extraordinaire* were composed of whole provinces, of states whose fate had not been decided, and of the produce of confiscations throughout the empire. He would have, doubtless, ended in absorbing all the public revenues and property which might chance to escape from the two other institutions of *imperial domains* and *private domains*. To divide the whole of France into fiefs, and to attach them to his domain, by annual service, was one of Napoleon's favourite ideas.

What a magnificent *régime* of military spoliation on the one hand, and of gifts and prodigality on the other. Whither was it likely to conduct us? To shed our blood in order to subject the whole world to a state of vassalage. And yet there was but little hope of satiating the voracity of the favourites and votaries of an insatiable conqueror.

Such calculations coming from my pen, and the reflections which accompany them, will occasion some readers, I doubt not, to smile or sneer. How, it will be said, was it, that this minister, so mortified because he was disgraced, remained a stranger to the abuses of lucrative gratuities which he now, perhaps, exclaims against because their source is dried up? Was he not himself loaded with honours and riches?—And who denies it? What, because a man has shared individually in the advantages of an outrageous, pernicious, and insupportable system, should he abstain from telling the truth when he has pledged himself to reveal everything? The time for reservation is past. It is, besides, necessary in

this place, to state the causes of the fall of the greatest empire which ever adorned or desolated the universe.

It will be seen how Napoleon, in a very little space of time, voluntarily precipitated himself beyond all the bounds of moderation and prudence.

As a consequence of the usurpation of Holland, he declared, in a message addressed to the senate (December 10, 1810), that new guarantees had become indispensable to him, and those which had appeared most urgent, were the reunion of the mouth of the Scheldt, of the Maes, of the Rhine, the Ems, the Weser, and the Elbe, and the establishment of a navigation in the Baltic. Thence a *senatus consultum* (December 13, 1810), decreeing that Holland, a considerable portion of the north of Germany, and the free towns of Hamburgh, Bremen, and Lubec, should, thenceforth, become an integral part of the French empire, and form ten new departments. It was thus that Napoleon, without thinking of consolidating what he had acquired, was incessantly tormented with the thirst of new acquisitions.

This violent incorporation was effected without any motive of right, even ostensible; without any previous negotiation with any cabinet whatsoever; and under the futile pretext, that it was rendered indispensable by the war with England. Napoleon, by this act, annihilated even his own creations; the states of the confederation of the Rhine, the kingdom of Westphalia, and all other territories, were called upon to furnish their quota towards this new lion's share.

But he thus obtained for himself a new frontier line, which deprived the southern and central provinces of Germany of all communication with the northern sea; which passed the Elbe, separated Denmark from Germany, established itself on the Baltic, and, in its direction, seemed intended to join with the line of Prussian fortresses, on the Oder, which we occupied, in spite of treaties.

It is obvious enough that all the neighbouring powers

must have been alarmed at an act which thus established, on the flanks of Germany, a new French dominion; and that by a mere decree, by a *senatus consultum*, exacted from a servile senate. I immediately concluded, that the treaty of Tilsit, the principal object of which was to prevent the two empires from bordering upon each other, was, by that means, annulled; and that France and Russia, thus brought into contact, would not be long before they would fall to blows.

When I learnt, by means of my correspondents at Paris, the uneasiness which the junction of the Hanse-towns caused to Russia, Prussia, and even Austria, I was confirmed in the opinion, that there was, in that circumstance, not only the germ of a new universal war, but of a conflict which would finally decide whether we were to have a universal monarchy in the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte, or the restoration of everything which the revolution had dispersed or destroyed.

Alas! with this great question was incorporated another; namely, the identical question of the interest of the revolution, and of the safety of the individuals who had founded and established it. What was to become of them? Could I remain cold, alien, and insensible to so alarming a future prospect?

Among the princes recently despoiled was the Duke of Oldenburg, of the house of Holstein Gottorp; that is to say, of the same house as the Emperor of Russia; and Napoleon thus took away the patrimony of a prince whom every reason ought to have induced him to spare. A negotiation was opened on this subject, between the court of St. Petersburg and the cabinet of the Tuileries. Napoleon, by way of indemnity, offered the Duke of Oldenburg the city and territory of Erfurt. When I learnt that this offer had just been haughtily rejected, that the Emperor Alexander had, by a formal protest, reserved the rights of his family from encroachment, and that his

ministers had received orders to present that protest at the various courts, I no longer entertained a doubt that war was on the point of breaking out. But, reflecting on the circumspect and measured character of the Emperor Alexander, I concluded that the approach of the crisis would neither be abrupt nor precipitate.

Let us now pass to the year 1811, during which all the elements of a frightful tempest were maturing in the midst of a deceitful calm, the illusions and deceptions of which I detected. From day to day my Parisian bulletins and my private correspondences assumed a character of a deeper interest. In order to connect the chain of facts, I will give here a sketch of the most striking details and features, scarcely allowing myself to combine with them some short reflections, or some necessary elucidations. I have, moreover, already said, that anxious as I am to arrive at the period of my re-entrance into office, an abridged historical transition, which will bring us to the catastrophes of 1813, 1814, and 1815, will be the most accordant with my design.

The first event which offers itself to notice, is that of the birth of a child, proclaimed King of Rome (March 20, 1811) at the first moment of its existence; as if a son of Bonaparte could not be born anything else than a king! This sudden revival of the kingdom of Tarquin the Proud, appeared to some persons in the light of a bad omen; it reminded too much of the recent spoliation of the holy see, and the oppression exercised upon the person of the sovereign pontiff. Ridiculous reports respecting the birth of this infant king were propagated, and accredited, in Paris. If these reports, which originated both in the upper and lower classes, did not prove the hostile tendency of public opinion, at that epoch, against the perpetuity of the new dynasty, I would have dispensed with alluding to them, as unworthy of the dignity of history. Malignity made a show of an ingenious credulity. A pretended pregnancy was at first supposed; as if an arch-duchess, becoming barren, could ever belie the

well-known Latin distich. The consequence of this supposition led to another fable, according to which, the King of Rome was identified with a child lately born from a connection between Napoleon and the Duchess de M——. Some newsmongers pretended that he was substituted in the place of a stillborn child; others in the room of a female infant. Certes, the arch-chancellor, Cambacérès, could not have been mistaken. The calumnies of the malignant were inexhaustible. It is, however, true, that the labour of Maria Louisa was horribly protracted; that the *accoucheur* got bewildered; that the child was concluded to be dead; and that he only recovered from his lethargy, by the effect of the repeated report of the hundred and one guns fired at his birth. As to the emperor's transport, it was very natural. Some flatterers inferred from it, in the first instance, that Napoleon, more fortunate than Cæsar, would have nothing to dread from the ides of March, since the 20th of March was distinguished as a day of good fortune, both for himself and the empire. Napoleon believed in horoscopes and predictions. Yet, what a disappointment he experienced in March, 1814 and 1815!

He departed from Rambouillet, with Maria Louisa, towards the end of May, in order to visit Cherbourg. On their return to St. Cloud (June 4, 1811), they presided at the baptism of their son, whom Napoleon, lifting in his arms, himself exhibited to the numerous persons present. All things seemed to conspire in announcing the most brilliant destinies for this child; three years sufficed to overthrow the colossal power of his father,—and yet the court, the great officers, the ministers, and the whole empire, lived in the most profound security. There were scarcely to be discovered, even among thinking men, a sign or two of apprehension and vague disquietude.

Some few days afterwards (June 16, 1811), Napoleon, opening the session of the legislative body, announced that

the birth of the King of Rome had accomplished his wishes, and fulfilled the prayers of his people. He spoke of the incorporation of the Roman states, of Holland, of the Hanse towns, and of the Valais; and concluded by saying, that he flattered himself that the peace of the continent would not be broken. France easily understood the purport of these last words, which were not dropped without a design of preparing the public mind for war.

The *ukase*, intended by the Emperor Alexander to extricate his empire from the embarrassment in which the continental system had thrown it, was made known to me. Russia could no longer renounce her maritime commerce. I, moreover, knew that the faction of the old Russians began to predominate in the councils of Alexander. The *ukase* confined the importation of merchandise to certain specified ports; and among those which were subjected to tariff, no article of French manufacture was found. I saw in that a retort for the arbitrary seizure of the Hanse towns.

As to our commerce, compressed from day to day within our immediate limits, it only existed in land-carriage; we had no other vessels of burden than waggons and drays. The great reputation of our industry rested, at that time, upon the manufacture of sugar from beet-root. It was a lucky experiment for certain adventurers in the line of national industry, who thereby obtained from the government advance-money, premiums, and grants of land. The administration exhausted its funds in these juggleries, the actors of which promised us beet-root sugar at a colonial price. According to my Parisian correspondents, the emperor had already, under a glass, on his mantelpiece, at St. Cloud, a loaf of refined beet-root sugar, which would bear comparison with the best colonial sugar that ever issued from the warehouses of the sugar-refiner of Orleans. It was so perfect a specimen, that his minister of the interior had presented it to him, with all the pomp which might correspond with a rarity worthy of figuring in a museum.

Specimens of it were sent in presents to the prince primate, and to all the little potentates of the confederation of the Rhine. If it was above the public reach, in consequence of its high price, it had, by way of compensation, under its hand, syrup of raisins and indigenous coffee made of chicory at a reasonable price. In the midst of this penury of colonial produce, some new manufactures flourished in the interior, and some hundred manufacturers, who shared in the distribution of prizes and premiums, loudly cried up the activity of our internal commerce.

All other commerce languished; and, what was still more deplorable, the people began to suffer from dearth, occasioned by a bad harvest, and aggravated by the extent of those exportations on which the government obtained a profit. To say the truth, indeed, in order to render misery less importunate, *depôts* of mendicity were established in different parts of the empire, where one portion of the population was successively penned up, and fed by means of economical soups. But the people who persevered in their *panivorous* propensities, accused the emperor of selling our corn to the English. It is certain that the corn-monopoly exercised by Napoleon partly contributed to produce the famine. The spirit which reigned in the *salons* was not more favourable to the emperor; it was even becoming hostile. Such was the manner in which public opinion was moulded since Savary directed it.

That individual, who was dazzled by the pomp of rank and the illusion of outward circumstances, imagined that he should arrive at a state of influence and power, if he possessed creatures, parasites, and literary men, enlisted at his table, and at his orders. He conceived that, in order to profit by my *traditions*, all that was necessary, was to ingratiate the *Faubourg St. Germain*, without divesting his police of its odious and irritating character. In a word, he thought he could form the public spirit of the empire, as *Madame de Genlis* formed the manners of the new court.

It was then that the famous *déjeuners à la fourchette* were established, at which Savary presided, and at which all the hired jurists, who corresponded with the emperor, and all the journalists who aspired to be made directors, or to receive money, were to be found. It was there that Savary, excited by previously made up *bons mot*, and by the fumes of a plentiful breakfast, imparted commands, to each of his guests, as to the colour they should give to the literature of the week.

The direction of this moral portion of the police was confided to the poet Esmenard, a writer of real talent, but in so much discredit, that I thought it necessary to keep the bridle constantly in his mouth, whenever I set him to work. Soon, taking too great an advantage of the superiority of his talents and of his position, he led the new minister, in flattering his passions and follies. I had respected learning and letters. My successor, appearing to become the protector of the academies, treated them in a military manner, forcing his own creatures upon them as candidates; and seemed to have nothing more at heart than the desire of degrading, in a scandalous manner, the organs of knowledge and of public opinion. I had respected the proprietorship of the journals; Savary invaded its rights with audacity, and divided its shares among his familiars and agents. Thus he deprived himself, in consequence of the degradation of the journals, of one of the principal levers of public opinion. It was in the same way that Napoleon took a dislike to Madame de Staël; and in concert with the poet Esmenard, did all he could to injure her; an impolitic persecution, because he thus made of the numerous coteries of that celebrated woman, a hot-bed of opposition to the imperial *régime*, and of animosity to the emperor.

In the upper police, there was the same system and the same violence; and there little Desmarets was to be found acting the part of an effective minister. What was to be expected from a man of such slender talents, and from the

combinations of a minister of his description? Awkward inventions, repulsive acts, and a vexatious administration. Some idea may be formed of it by the following example. A certain *Baron de Kolly*, a Piedmontese, who was commissioned by the British government to attempt the liberation of Ferdinand of Spain from his captivity, disembarked about the beginning of March, 1810, in Quiberon Bay; thence he proceeded to Paris, where I ordered him to be arrested and conveyed to the *château de Vincennes*. What, forsooth, does my successor do? He imagines a plan of trying Ferdinand's inclinations, by means of a false Baron de Kolly, supplied with the papers and the letters of credit belonging to the real emissary. Ferdinand the Seventh was, however, upon his guard; he saw the snare, avoided it, and left Savary to put the best face he could on his defeat.

The Queen of Etruria, deprived of her states, lived at Nice, in exile, where she was shamefully treated; emissaries were sent to induce her to throw herself into the arms of the English. This unhappy queen, driven to despair, embraced what appeared to her the only means of safety; she was arrested and threatened to be carried before a military commission, and two of her officers were shot. When there is no conspiracy, a sham one is easily imagined, or a real one excited. It was in this manner that some unfortunate inhabitants of Toulon, said to be implicated in an obscure plot against our arsenals, were dragged to punishment in a city yet bleeding with the memory of its past afflictions.

In the meanwhile, opinion remained silent. There was no more communication; no more open conversations; no more confidence among the citizens. It was only in the interior of the domestic circle, or in the bosom of friendship, that the public grief dared to express itself in stifled accents of affliction. In default of public opinion, the emperor wished to be supplied with that which emanated from the *salons* of Paris. A factitious opinion was manufactured

expressly for his service, by the three hundred police spies, hired at large salaries. There were, in this manner, several statistical surveys of public feeling ; the five or six polices supplied theirs. The least insignificant was, unquestionably, that of the director-general of posts, Lavalette. Already a correspondent and confidential emissary of Napoleon, when he was only a general, he was well acquainted with what was agreeable to him in this respect. The emperor, who was soon enabled to appreciate what was wanting in these secret researches, the true spirit of which no one but myself had seized, demanded facts. These were furnished ; but miserable facts they were ; and he concluded, either by rejecting or not reading them, so tiresome and incoherent did he find them. In my retreat, some of these bulletins, got up by the pupils of the police system, were brought to me. At a later period, Savary himself wrote entirely the bulletin which issued from his own cabinet, believing that he should by that means impart more importance to his vague discoveries.

If, since my disgrace, the police had degenerated in its most essential functions, it was the same with another public office, which was also the asylum of mystery. I allude to the office of foreign relations, where, since the resignation of M. de Talleyrand, the spirit of conquest, of violence, and oppression, were no longer repressed by moderation or restraint. Napoleon had the imprudence (and the consequences will be seen presently) to disgust that personage, so independent in mind, so brilliant in talent, and so practised and refined in his taste ; who, moreover, had by his diplomacy done him at least as much service as I myself had been able to render him in the higher affairs of state, which concerned the security of his person. But Napoleon could never forgive Talleyrand, for having always spoken of the war in Spain with a disapproving freedom of speech. In a short time the *salons* and the boudoirs of Paris became the theatre of a secret warfare between the adherents of Napoleon on the

one side, and of Talleyrand and his friends on the other—a war in which epigrams and *bon mots* constituted the artillery, and in which the victor of Europe was almost always beaten. This species of satirical encounter assumed a more serious character, in proportion as the Spanish war grew more envenomed in its progress. On their side, M. and Madame de Talleyrand only took a warmer interest in the princes of the house of Spain, banished to their *château de Valency*, by a petty refinement of vengeance on the part of Napoleon. Daily more incensed with Talleyrand, he one day perceived him at his levée, in the midst of his courtiers ; and, in the hope of humiliating him, by taking advantage of an affair of gallantry supposed to have passed at Valency, he put a question to him which, to a husband, is considered as one of the greatest of insults. Without exhibiting any emotion in his countenance, Talleyrand replied in a dignified manner, "It would be well both for the glory of your majesty and mine, if the princes of the house of Spain were never mentioned." Never did Napoleon display so much confusion, as after receiving this severe lesson, given in a manner which showed such a high sense of good-breeding. All things shortly announced a complete disgrace, and the position of Talleyrand was gradually becoming more difficult. His mansion, his friends, and his servants, were subjected to a perpetual *espionnage*, which Savary himself even affected not to disguise. He boasted to his familiar partisans that he kept Talleyrand and Fouché in perpetual alarm. The public drew the inference, that the chief of the state, through his suspicious character, had deprived himself of the services of two men, whose advice would always have been beneficial ; and that either in the police department, or in the foreign affairs, there were no longer sufficient moderation or ability, since they had retired. The police was nothing more than a fruitless and aggravating inquisition. In the department of foreign affairs, they had become accustomed to look upon treaties as mere truces, or expedients calculated to arrive at

new wars. They even went so far as no longer to blush at making the most scandalous avowals. "We no longer want principles," said Champagny-Cadore, who succeeded Talleyrand; the same individual who had himself directed the violence exercised on the person of the pope and the princes of the house of Spain. And yet, this same minister, when out of the diplomatic sphere, or rather beyond the influence of Napoleon, was one of the mildest men in France in deportment, and one of the most moderate in opinion. Soon, we shall see him share in a disgrace which, it seems, none of Napoleon's ministers could escape. As it was no longer possible to maintain one's self in place, except by flattering the passions of the individual who had the source of all power and favour, the *journeymen labourers* of the imperial politics again set themselves briskly to work, in order to accelerate the fall of England and the humiliation of Russia. Memorials and projects followed each other, under the protection of the secret police of Desmarets and Savary, whose function it was to make themselves responsible for those daily projectors. The emperor no longer received any reports, but those in which the truth of facts and their consequences were either distorted or disguised; he no longer imbibed any information but such as was derived from impassioned correspondences, replete with proposals and projects of intrigue, adventures, and acts of violence.

The idea was at length entertained of manœuvring (*travailler*) England at the same time as Russia. I had endeavoured without effect, while I held the reins of the high police, to bring the emperor to sounder ideas respecting England. The emperor esteemed the English, and had no especial dislike to England; but he feared the oligarchy of its government. It was his belief that England, under a system of this description, would never suffer him to enjoy a substantial peace, but only a truce of three years to the utmost, after which it would be necessary to begin again. I could never succeed in destroying the prejudices and mis-

apprehensions of the emperor on this head. Other persons, by the coarsest sophistries, inflamed his ruling passion against the nature of the British constitution, a passion which plunged him once more into an universal war. It was a revolution in earnest which Bonaparte wished to effect in England; he thirsted with a desire to strangle the liberty of the press, and the liberty of parliamentary discussion. Induced to wish for the moment when he could behold that island, in her turn, a prey to the horrors of a political revolution, he sent agents there, who deceived him as to its actual condition. I told him a hundred times that England was as powerful through her constitution as through her naval force; but he preferred believing the representations of interested spies. It was in the hope of causing internal dissensions to explode, that, during the year 1811, he chiefly gave his mind to the project of entirely excluding English commerce from the continent. His emissaries did not fail to attribute to the continental blockade the distress of the manufactures in that kingdom, as well as the numerous bankruptcies, which, during the course of that same year, struck deadly blows at the stability of English credit. They announced the approach of serious tumults; and maintained that England could not much longer support a state of war, which cost her more than fifty millions sterling.

In fact, riots among the working people who had no occupation broke out in Nottinghamshire. The mutineers assembled in numbers, burnt or destroyed the looms, and committed all kinds of excess. They described themselves as being under the orders of a Captain *Ludd*, an imaginary personage, whence they received the name of *Luddites*. The emperor considered this in the light of a national wound, which it was his policy to enlarge, like that of Ireland. In a short time, indeed, the system of insurrection extended its sphere of action, and involved the neighbouring counties of Derby and Leicester. It was affirmed in the cabinet of Napoleon, that persons of note were not strangers to the

commotion, and were even its instigators. In case of a serious insurrection, supported by correspondent movements, prepared in London, the co-operation, more or less efficacious, of our prisoners, who amounted to fifty thousand, was calculated upon. Such was one of the motives which influenced Napoleon in not consenting to their proposed exchange. As we had no more than ten thousand English prisoners in France, but near fifty-three thousand Spanish and Portuguese, the emperor feigned to consent to an exchange, but only in the proportion of one Englishman and four Spaniards or Portuguese, against five Frenchmen or Italians. He was sure beforehand that England would reject an exchange founded upon this principle. In fact, the mere proposal highly incensed the English ministry.

Napoleon, who became more rigid as to continental system, in proportion as he saw the distress of England increasing, insisted upon the ports of Sweden being more completely closed, only leaving to that power the choice of a war with England or with France. This impolitical severity, exhibited towards an independent power, proceeded in some degree from his discontent with Bernadotte, who had been proclaimed, the year preceding (Aug. 21, 1810), by the unanimous vote of the Swedish states, prince royal, and hereditary successor of King Charles XIII. This sudden elevation had not pleased Napoleon, at the bottom of his heart, and his resentment against his old companion in arms had gone on increasing since the mission with which I had intrusted him, in 1809, for the defence of Antwerp. Napoleon was persuaded that there was a secret intelligence between Bernadotte and myself at that time, and that if he had then experienced any striking reverse in Germany, I should have caused Bernadotte to be proclaimed either first consul or emperor, in order to close the gates of France against him for ever. Thus, on the other hand, he saw him first depart for the North, without regret, considering himself too happy to be delivered from the presence of a man, whom Savary,

and his familiars, represented to him in the light of an adversary, who might one day become formidable. Believing even, for some months, that he should be able to retain him compulsively, within the orbits of his own politics, he addressed note upon note, and injunction upon injunction, to the government of Charles XIII., to induce it to keep its ports rigorously closed against English commerce. Exasperated that sufficient promptitude was not exhibited in accomplishing his views, he caused his privateers to seize such Swedish vessels as were loaded with colonial produce, and persevered in the occupation of Pomerania. Mutual complaints being thus engendered, Napoleon gave new disquietude to the government of which Bernadotte had become the hope and the arbiter. The whole of the year 1811 was spent in altercations between the two states.

The knowledge which I had of the character of Bernadotte gave me sufficient reason to foresee that he would conclude by throwing himself into the arms of Russia, and of England; either to guarantee the independence of Sweden, or to secure his rights of inheritance to a crown of which Napoleon showed himself envious.

My former connection with the Prince of Sweden gave the Emperor (through the representation of Savary) the idea that I secretly excited Bernadotte to maintain himself in an attitude of opposition to the cabinet of St. Cloud. I soon learnt, beyond the possibility of doubt, that I was watched, and that my letters were opened. And here I beg to ask what would be thought of me, if I had not put myself in a condition to defeat the ridiculous investigations of a police, all the windings of which I was acquainted with? I was not, however, ignorant of what was passing at Stockholm, nor even in all the North; I had Colonel V. C—— near the person of Bernadotte, who supplied me with all that it was necessary to know.

Let us conclude, by some reflections on the Peninsular war, our sketch of the political events of 1811, which will

bring us to the fatal expedition into Russia. The resistance of the Spanish people had already assumed the character of a national war, and it was Napoleon himself who had opened this field of battle on the continent, for England's advantage.

Ever since the beginning of 1810, the war had become so complicated in Spain, it already offered so many chances to the ambition and the rivalries of the various generals, that when King Joseph came to Paris, to attend the nuptials of the emperor, he made an express demand that all the troops should be withdrawn, or that they should be placed under his immediate orders, or rather under the direction of his major-general. The emperor took good care not to grant him the recall of the troops ; but he invested him with their command. Joseph then took with him, from Paris, Marshal Jourdan, who bore the title of major-general to the King of Spain. The generals-in-chief were supposed to be under his orders, and were to send their reports to King Joseph, and to the emperor at the same time. But these measures remedied nothing ; there were always several armies, and the generals depending at once on Paris and Madrid, took precautions to depend upon neither ; their first and principal object was to remain masters of the provinces which they occupied, or for which they were contending with the enemy.

In the meanwhile, we had been twice driven from Portugal, where the English army found infinite resources, and a secure place of refuge. All things ought to have convinced Napoleon, that in order to subject the Peninsula, it was, in the first place, indispensable to effect the conquest of Lisbon, and compel the English to re-embark. To this he had, in some sort, pledged himself in the face of Europe. But his genius was in fault, in this instance, as in many other decisive circumstances, where the irritability and impetuosity of his character ought to have given way to profounder views, or at least to the most ordinary foresight.

How could it have escaped his notice, that he was risking not only his Spanish conquest, but even his own fortune, in suffering a military and hostile reputation to establish itself in the Peninsula? Europe had a sufficient number of soldiers; all that she wanted was a general capable of guiding them, and of making a stand against the French army, no matter how. It is incredible how this view of the subject could have escaped the observation of Napoleon. It was only through too great a confidence in himself and in his good fortune. Thus, instead of marching in person at the head of a formidable army, to drive Wellington out of Portugal (and this the state of the continent, at that time, permitted), he sent Masséna there, the most skilful, doubtless, of his lieutenants, a man gifted with unusual courage and remarkable perseverance, whose talent grew with the increase of danger, and who, when vanquished, always appeared ready to recommence the struggle as if he had been the victor. But, Masséna, who was a daring depredator, was also the secret enemy of the emperor, who had compelled him to disgorge three millions of money (£120,000). Like Soult, he indulged himself in the belief that he also might be enabled to win a crown at the point of the sword; the examples of Napoleon, of Murat, and of Bernadotte, were besides so alluring, that Masséna's mind easily gave way to ambitious visions of reigning in his turn. Full of hope, he began his march at the head of 60,000 soldiers; but in the very middle of the first difficulties of the expedition, he received certain intelligence that the emperor was disposed to restore Portugal to the house of Braganza, provided England would consent to his retaining Spain; and that a secret negotiation was opened for that purpose. Masséna, piqued and discouraged, suffered the fire of his military genius to evaporate. Moreover, in an operation so decisive, no one could supply Napoleon's place; he alone could dare to sacrifice from 30,000 to 40,000 men to carry the formidable lines of Torres Vedras, which surrounded

Lisbon as a rampart of steel. And yet everything was about to depend on the issue of this campaign of 1810, both with reference to Napoleon and to Europe. It showed a real deficiency of tact and genius, to have failed in perceiving this intimate co-relation.

What was the consequence? The campaign failed; Lord Wellington triumphed. Masséna, falling into disgrace, returned to dance attendance in the saloons of the Tuileries, only obtaining, after a month's solicitation, a private audience, in which he detailed the reverses of the campaign; and, in short, the Peninsular war, notwithstanding many great exploits, exhibited, upon the whole, an alarming aspect. Suchet alone, in the eastern provinces, transmitted titles of incontestible glory to the French name; he effected the conquest of the kingdom of Valencia, and was always equal to himself. While he was, as it were, making himself independent there, Soult, who had not been able to make himself King of Portugal, was playing the part of a sovereign in Andalusia; and Marmont, rallying the wrecks of the army of Portugal, acted separately, on the Douro and the Tormes; in a word, the lieutenants of Bonaparte established distinct military governments, and Joseph was no more than a fictitious king. He could no longer go out of Madrid without having an army for his escort; more than once he narrowly escaped being taken by the *guerillas;* his kingdom was not his own; the provinces which we occupied were, in reality, no more than French provinces, ruined by our armies, or devastated by the *guerillas*, who harassed us without intermission. I lay it down as a fact, that all the subsequent reverses of the Peninsula are to be attributed to the errors of the campaign of 1810, so falsely conceived, and so heedlessly undertaken. Towards the end of 1811, Joseph despatched the Marquess of Almenara, invested with full powers to sign his formal abdication at Paris, or to obtain a recognition of the independence of Spain. But Napoleon, turning his whole attention towards Russia, postponed his

decision regarding Spain, till after the issue of the great and distant enterprise in which he was about to engulf himself.

The Russian war was not a war undertaken for the sake of sugar and coffee, as the vulgar at first believed, but a war purely political. If the causes of it have not been accurately understood, it is because, covered with the mysterious veil of diplomacy, they could only be perceived by enlightened observers and statesmen. The seeds of the Russian war were enclosed even in the treaty of Tilsit. In order to prove this, it will be sufficient for me to adduce its immediate consequences. The foundation of the kingdom of Westphalia for the Napoleonian dynasty ; the accession of the largest portion of the princes of the north of Germany to the confederation of the Rhine ; the erection of the duchy of Warsaw, a nucleus for the re-establishment of Poland, an ever-acting bugbear in the hands of its inventor, and which he might direct, at his will, either against Russia or against Austria ; the re-establishment of the republic of Dantzic, of which the independence was guaranteed, but whose permanent subjection gave to Napoleon a port and a garrison town on the Baltic ; finally, military roads secured to the French armies across the Prussian states, and which broke down every barrier interposed between France and the Russian frontiers ;—such were the conditions to which the Russian cabinet subscribed in exchange for eventual acquisitions in Turkey, which soon turned out to be illusory. It is true, it was not so with regard to Finland. But, however that might be, we cannot deny that, if the Russian autocrat acknowledged an equal in Napoleon, he also recognised in him a conqueror, who, sooner or later, would avail himself of his advantages.

But, first, directing his ambitious views towards the south, Spain, Portugal, and Spanish America became the immediate objects of his cupidity. Hence resulted a respite in favour of the Russian empire, while Napoleon appeared to abide by a captious treaty. But it cost him very little,

besides, to fascinate the eyes of those whom he caressed while he was concerting their ruin. At the time when I was near him, his views upon Russia had not escaped me ; and, I confess that, seduced myself by the grandeur of his plans, I had once indulged in the hope of seeing the re-establishment of Poland, founded upon its liberty ; but Napoleon repelling Kosciusko, or at least endeavouring to draw him into a snare, I perceived that his only object was to extend his dominion beyond the Vistula, and the example of his ravages in Spain soon corrected my judgment.

In fine, it was well understood that the Emperor Alexander, in order to preserve peace, was, in everything, to please Napoleon, his cabinet, his ministers, and his ambassadors ; and that he was not to deviate, in any respect, from the obligation of acknowledging his supremacy and of obeying his will.

While proceeding to the conquest of Spain, Napoleon had put the finishing hand to his federal system, and thus prepared the way to universal monarchy. The last defeat of Austria followed ; next the forced marriage of an archduchess,—and the change operated in the politics of the latter power. Then the European continent lost all hope of being able to shake off the yoke, as long as the Emperor Alexander remained faithful to his alliance with the chief of the federal empire, already named *the great empire.* But how was it possible to breathe in the neighbourhood of so oppressive an atmosphere of ambition? Russia already began to recognise that the infallible results of the continental system, for every nation which submitted to it, was the ruin of commerce and of industry, the establishment of excessive imposts, the burden of immense armies nearly foreign to their princes, and princes incapable of protecting their trembling subjects from the gripe of the usurper of Europe.

The Emperor Alexander, after three years of an ambiguous and burdensome alliance, at length opened his eyes.

He found it was necessary to gather all the strength of his empire, in order to secure his independence. Instructed by his emissaries that the anti-French party, or that of the old Russians, began to prevail in the cabinet of St. Petersburg, Napoleon returned, with regard to Russia, to his plan of 1805 and 1806, which he had only at that time postponed, with the intention of preparing its execution with more efficacy.

This was his plan: to divide or abolish the Russian empire, or compel the Emperor Alexander to make a humiliating peace, followed by an alliance between Russia, France, and Austria, the basis and the price of which were to be the restoration of Poland, and the dissolution of the empire of the crescent. This was to be followed by the acceding of all Europe to the continental system, which, with Bonaparte, was only a mask for universal domination.

But, in the first instance, it was indispensable to gain Russia by intimidation, or otherwise to make a deadly war upon her, for the purpose of abrogating her power, or expelling her into Asia. Exertions were made, long beforehand, to shake the fidelity of the Poles, by preparing their minds, by means of underhand negotiation.

When Napoleon had determined that all the springs of his diplomacy should be put in motion towards the north, he changed his minister of foreign affairs, the complication of so many intrigues and manœuvres becoming too much, not indeed for the zeal, but for the energy, of Champagny-Cadore.

Napoleon did not think himself secure in confiding the weight of affairs, so important, to any other person than Maret, the chief of his *secrétariat*,—that is to say, all foreign affairs were, from that moment, concentrated in his cabinet, and received no other impulse than from him. Under this point of view, Maret, who was a true official machine, was the very man whom the emperor wanted. Without being a bad man, he really admired his master, whose thoughts,

secrets, and inclinations, he was acquainted with. He was, moreover, his confidential secretary, and the individual best acquainted with the art of connecting or transfusing into grammatical phraseology his effusions and political imaginations. It was also he who kept the secret book, in which the emperor made his notes of such individuals of all countries and parties, who might be useful to him, as well as of men who were pointed out to his notice, and whose intentions he suspected. He also kept the *tarif* of all courts and pensioned personages from one end of Europe to the other ; in short, it was Maret who, for a long time past, had directed the emissaries of the cabinet. Constantly devoted to the caprices of Napoleon, and opposing nothing but the calmness of unconquerable resignation to the violence of the emperor, it was with perfect sincerity, and under the impression that he was following the line of his duty, that Maret unscrupulously lent himself to proceedings which attacked the security of the states. Never did it enter his mind to oppose the will of Napoleon ; hence, the increasing good graces of his master in his favour.

These mysteries of the cabinet, the unusual tone of some of the notes in 1811, the indication of great preparations secretly set on foot, and manœuvres and intrigues abroad, awakened the attention of Russia. The Czar had already found that the time was come to penetrate Napoleon's projects, and, desiring to obtain some better guarantee than that of his ambassador, Kourakin, who was too much cajoled at St. Cloud, and besides was a partisan of the continental system, he had despatched Count Czernitscheff to Paris, ever since the month of January, on a diplomatic mission. This young nobleman, who was the colonel of a regiment of cossacks, in the Russian imperial guard, attracted the notice of the court of Napoleon, on his first appearance, by his politeness and chivalrous deportment. He appeared in every circle, and at every fête ; and he obtained there, as well as among the highest society, so great a success, that

he soon became the rage among all those ladies who contended for the empire of elegance and beauty. They all aspired to the homage of the amiable and brilliant envoy of the Russian emperor. For some time he appeared to be doubtful about his choice, but at length it was to the Duchess of R—— that the Paris of the Neva gave the apple. This intrigue made the more noise, inasmuch as it was the emperor, and not his minister of police, who first suspected that, under the mask of gallantry, under the exterior of amiable and showy accomplishments, the Russian envoy concealed a mission of political investigation. Suspicions increased when he was seen to return upon a new mission, a month after his departure. Vexed at having been anticipated and forewarned by his master, Savary, in order to please him, commissioned his factotum, Esmenard, to let fly some pointed, but indirect, squibs at the Czar's emissary. The very evening previous to his arrival (11th of April, 1811), the semi-official scribe inserted, in the *Journal de l'Empire*, an article, in which were related the travels of an officer, named Bower, in the employ of Russia, who Prince Potemkin commissioned one while to hire a dancer at Paris; at another time to purchase *Botargo* in Albania, water-melons in Astracan, and grapes in the Crimea. The allusion was obvious. Czernitscheff felt himself insulted, and complained firmly, having previously consulted with his ambassador. The intention of Napoleon not being to hurry a rupture, he pretended to be exasperated at a satire of which he had himself supplied the idea; and, by way of satisfaction, pronounced the ostensible disgrace of Esmenard, who was temporarily banished to Naples; though loaded at the same time with gold and secret favours. These gifts were fatal to him; he was, two months after (25th of June, 1811), run away with by spirited horses, which dashed him down a precipice, on the road to Fondi, and the unfortunate man was killed by the fracture of his skull against a rock.

Meantime, Napoleon and his ministers were incessant in their complaints at St. Petersburg of the effects produced by the *ukase* of the 31st of December, which favoured the interest of England by permitting the introduction of her colonial goods. The Paris Journals even frequently announced that English vessels were admitted into Russian ports. From that time, all clear-sighted men felt convinced that a new rupture was inevitable. It was well understood that the apparent causes of irritation merely served as disguises for political complaints, which had become the subject of animated debates between the two empires. In the autumn of 1811, the war was considered, even in England, to be imminent, and the cabinet of London was persuaded that Napoleon could no longer send to his armies in Spain the reinforcement which his brother Joseph solicited.

It was also from this epoch, an epoch still fresh on my memory, that, by the sole medium of rumours and conjectures spread through society, and repeated in all classes, public prepossession was created, accompanied by so great an expectation, which, during six or eight months, absorbing all the attention of the popular mind, concentrated it upon the immense enterprise which Napoleon was about to undertake. I was so absorbed in it, that I felt the greatest desire of drawing nearer to the capital. I hoped to be enabled to change my relative position there, and, by that means, find myself in a condition to present to the emperor, while time remained, some observations calculated to make him abandon his resolution, or induce him to modify his projects; for a secret presentiment seemed to warn me that he was in this case rushing on his destruction.

Great difficulties, however, obstructed this design. In the first instance, I could not dissemble from myself, that I had become an object of suspicion and disquietude to the emperor; I knew that an order to watch all my actions had been repeatedly given; but that the high police had found

itself so much at fault, as to be obliged to allege that my great distance and mode of life rendered all watching abortive ; that, in a word, I evaded all kinds of investigations with infinite adroitness. Upon this *datum* I founded my chance of success for the direct demand, which I addressed to the emperor, through the intervention of Duroc ; and I caused it adroitly to be supported by the Count de Narbonne, who was at that time rising rapidly in favour.

I alleged, that the climate of the South was particularly prejudicial to my health ; that such was the opinion of my physicians ; that, moreover, a residence of some months, on my estate of Pont-Carré, was rendered indispensably necessary, by the interests of my family ; that I should derive great comfort from being allowed to retire into seclusion, for which I had always entertained a decided predilection. I immediately received permission ; but Duroc at the same time confidentially advised me to live at Ferrières, in the greatest possible privacy, in order to give no cause of umbrage, especially as I had the police and many prejudices against me. I consequently changed my residence, but without display, and, if I may so express myself, incognito. As soon as I arrived at Ferrières, I began to live in seclusion, receiving nobody, and apparently having no other occupation than that of benefiting my health, educating my children, and improving my estate. It was necessary to employ infinite caution, in order to receive, from Paris, in the vicinity of which I now was, that secret information, the want of which had now become an invincible habit. Considering the importance of the conjuncture, I soon felt that nothing could replace those confidential conversations, which I possessed the art of drawing out, without ever having had to reproach myself with breach of confidence. But situated as I was, it was only by stealth, and at long intervals, that I was enabled to obtain a few clandestine interviews with trusty and devoted

persons. When this happened, they were always admitted unknown to my people, through a small door, of which I alone had the key, and under cover of the shades of night. It was in a secret corner of my house that I received them, and where we ran no risk of being heard or surprised.

Of all the individuals who were for the existing government, or composing a part of it, the estimable and worthy Malouet was the only one who had courage enough to visit me openly, and without disguise. It was then that I was enabled to appreciate all the merit of that valuable man. I was deeply affected in thus seeing him defy authority, to extend a friendly hand to his school-fellow and the companion of his youth ;[1] and yet, we had held opposite opinions in politics, and were even then divided on important points. He had always been a prudent and moderate royalist ; I had been an enthusiastic republican. On this account, Malouet, on his return to France, had brought back strong and well-founded prejudices against me. Those prejudices were only dissipated when he was enabled to judge for himself that I was now a different man, matured by experience and reflection, employing the vast power with which I was invested for no other purpose than to disarm hostile passions, and heal the wounds of the revolution. He then did me justice, and concluded by the profession of an inviolable friendship. This flattering feeling, which he carried with him to the tomb, is, beyond a doubt, the most honourable pledge that I can offer either to my enemies or my friends.

How deep and exquisite were those moments of mutual confidence ! Although divided by shades of opinion, we soon met on the same ground ; viewing the errors of power with the same eyes, impressed with the same anxieties, and convinced that Europe was upon the eve of one of the most terrible social crises which had ever shaken the nations of

[1] Fouché and M. Malouet had been fellow-students at the *Oratoire.*—*Note by the French Editor.*

the earth. The Russian war, now considered inevitable, and the extravagant ambition of the chief of the state, composed the text of our commentaries and reflections. I learnt from Malouet, that Napoleon had proposed to the emperor of Russia, that the latter should invest his ambassador, Kourakin, with powers to enter into negotiations, on the subject of the three points in dispute; namely: 1st, the *ukase* of the 31st of December, which, according to our cabinet, had annulled the treaty of Tilsit, and the conventions consequent upon it; 2nd, the protest of the Emperor Alexander, against the delivering up to France the duchy of Oldenburg, Russia having no right, according to our cabinet, to meddle with anything that concerned a prince of the confederation of the Rhine; 3rd, the order which Alexander had given his Moldavian army, to direct its march towards the frontiers of the duchy of Warsaw. But Alexander, whose eyes were already open to the consequences of his alliance with Napoleon, eluded the proposition; at the same time promising to send to Paris Count Nesselrode, who had superseded Count Romanzoff in his confidence.

On a full examination of the matter, we considered the points in dispute to be nothing but pretexts, mutually put forward, in order to conceal the real question of state; that question consisted in the power and rivalry of two empires, which had latterly become too proximate not to be induced to contend for the continental supremacy. Although he considered as useless and abortive the representations which I proposed to make to Napoleon, on the subject of the danger of this new war, Malouet did not endeavour to dissuade me from the attempt; on the contrary, he told me that it was a kind of protest which I owed to my country, to myself, and to the importance of the office I had filled; and which it was proper to make for the exoneration of my conscience. I showed him the draught I had made of it, which he approved, observing, however, that I ought not to show too much anxiety, since, as nothing official or ostensible

had appeared to occasion my solicitude, it would seem as if I had penetrated the state secret; that it depended on myself alone to seize the opportune occasion, for which, according to all probability, I should not have long to wait. We took leave of each other, and I resumed my task.

The emperor, with a view to ingratiate himself with his new subjects in Holland, departed in September, on a journey along the coast. On his return, his attention was, without loss of time, directed towards his immense preparations for the Russian war. For the mere sake of form, privy councils were held, at which none but the most servile instruments of power attended. Never had Napoleon exerted that power, materially or morally, in a more despotic manner;—keeping his ministers and council of state in a condition of dependence upon him by means of *senatus consulta*, which emanated from his cabinet; dispensing with the legislative body by means of the senate, and with both by means of the council of state, which was entirely under his thumb. He, besides, never took the least heed of the advice of his ministers, and governed less by means of decrees submitted on their part to his approbation, than of acts secretly suggested to him by his correspondents, his private agents, and more frequently by his own impulses or impatience. It has been seen to what a degree flattery had obtained possession of his court, of his officers, of his ministers, and council. Panegyric had become so outrageous, that adoration was a matter of command, and, from that moment, it became shameful.

The rumours of the Russian war daily increasing in consistency, became, in consequence of the general fever of the public mind, the subject of every conversation. At length the very acts of the government began to lift a corner of the veil. A *senatus consultum* of the 20th of December placed 120,000 men, of the conscription of 1812, at the disposal of the emperor. The harangue of the government orator and the report of the committee of the senate were not made

public, and this furnished additional motives for ascribing everything to the approaching rupture.

I had arranged all my ideas on the dangers of engaging in that distant war, which would admit of no comparison with any other ; I had nothing more to do, therefore, than to make a fair copy of my memorial, which it was now time to present. It was divided into three sections. In the first, I treated of the unseasonable period selected for the Russian war, and I drew my principal inferences from the dangers which would result from undertaking it at the very moment when the flames of war in Spain, instead of being extinguished, were daily more and more increasing. I proved, by examples, that it was a combination entirely contrary to the rules of politics established even by conquering nations. In the second section, I treated of the difficulties inherent in the war itself; difficulties which were, I might say, intrinsic, and I deduced my arguments from the nature of the country, and from the character of the inhabitants, considered under the double point of view of nobility and people. I did not omit to notice even the character of the emperor, which I thought myself warranted in considering as being wrongly judged, or not understood. Finally, in the third and last section, I treated of the probable consequences of the war, looking at them under the two hypotheses of a complete success or a complete reverse. In the first case, I laid down that to think of arriving at a universal monarchy, through the conquest of Russia, bordering upon China, was a brilliant chimera ; that from Moscow the conqueror would inevitably be drawn on to fall, at first, upon Constantinople, and thence to proceed to the Ganges, by the effect of the same irresistible impulse which had formerly impelled, beyond all the bounds of true state reasons, Alexander, the Macedonian ; and, subsequently, another still more profound and cooler genius, namely, Julius Cæsar, who, on the eve of undertaking his war against the Parthians (the Russians of that period), indulged

the frantic hope of making the tour of the world with his victorious legions. It may be easily perceived that, with this matter for my text, I could not sink beneath my subject, with respect to general considerations. "Sire," said I to Napoleon, "you are now in possession of the finest monarchy upon earth; is it your wish incessantly to enlarge its boundaries, in order to leave the inheritance of an interminable war to a weaker arm than your own? The lessons of history repel the idea of an universal monarchy. Take care lest too much confidence in your military genius should induce you to exceed all the bounds of nature, and shock all the precepts of wisdom.

"It is full time to pause. You have, Sire, reached that point of your career in which all that you have acquired is more valuable than all which additional efforts could add to your acquisitions. All new increase of your dominion, which already exceeds all proportion, is associated with obvious danger, not only for France, already overwhelmed, perhaps, under the weight of your conquests, but also for the well-understood interest of your own glory and security. All that your power can gain in superficial extent will be lost in substantial value. Pause, it is time; enjoy, in short, the advantages of a destiny which is, beyond a doubt, the most brilliant of all those which, in our modern times, the state of civilization could permit a bold mind either to desire or possess.

"And what is the empire which you seek to subject? The Russian empire, resting upon the Pole, and backed by eternal ice; which is only assailable during one quarter of the year; which offers to its assailants nothing but hardships, sufferings, and the privations of a barren soil, and of a region universally benumbed and dead? It is the Antæus of fable. You cannot conquer it unless you stifle it in your arms. What! Sire, will you penetrate into the depths of the modern Scythia, heedless either of the rigour and inclemency of the climate, of the barrenness of the

country which you will have to pass, of the roads, lakes, and forests, which alone are sufficient to arrest your march, of the dreadful fatigue, and innumerable dangers, which will exhaust your army, however formidable it may be! True; no force in the world can prevent you passing the Niemen, and plunging into the deserts and forests of Lithuania; but you will find the Dwina a much more difficult obstacle to surmount than the Niemen, and, even there, you will still be a hundred leagues distant from St. Petersburg. There you will have to choose between St. Petersburg and Moscow. What a balance of chances, just Heaven, will that be which will decide you to march towards either of these two capitals! In one or the other will be found the destiny of the universe.

"Whatever may be your success, the Russians will dispute with you, inch by inch, those desert countries, in which you will find none of the necessaries of war. You must draw everything from a distance of two hundred leagues. Whilst you will have to fight, perhaps, thirty battles, the half of your army will be employed in defending your lines of communication, weakened by their extension, and menaced and broken by clouds of cossacks. Take care, lest all your genius be unable to save your army, a prey to fatigue, hunger, want of clothing, and the severity of the climate; take care, lest you be afterwards compelled to fight between the Elbe and the Rhine. Sire, I conjure you in the name of France, for the sake of your own glory, and of ours, replace your sword in its scabbard—think of Charles XII. It is true that prince could not, like you, command two-thirds of continental Europe, together with an army of six hundred thousand men; but, on the other hand, the czar had but four hundred thousand men and fifty thousand cossacks. Perhaps you will say his heart was of iron, while nature has bestowed the mildest disposition upon the Emperor Alexander; but do not deceive yourself, mildness is not incompatible with firmness, especially when such

vital interests are at stake. Besides, will you not have as opponents, his senate, the majority of the nobles, the imperial family, a fanatical people, hardy and warlike troops, and the intrigues of the cabinet of St. James's? Even now, if Sweden escape you, it is by the sole influence of British gold. Fear, lest that irreconcilable island should shake the fidelity of your allies; take care, Sire, lest your people should reproach you with an inconsiderate ambition, and anticipate too much the possibility of some great misfortune. Your power and glory have laid asleep many hostile passions; but one unexpected reverse may shake all the foundations of your empire."

This memorial being finished, I requested an audience of the emperor. I was introduced into his cabinet, at the Tuileries. He had scarcely perceived me, when assuming an easy manner: "Here you are, Duke; I know what brings you." "What, Sire?" "Yes, I know you have a memorial to lay before me." "It is not possible." "Never mind; I know it, give me the paper, I will read it; I am not, however, ignorant that the Russian war is no more to your taste than the Spanish." "Sire, I do not think that the present war is successful enough for us to fight without risk, and at the same time beyond the Pyrenees and the Niemen; the desire and the want of seeing your majesty's power for ever secured have emboldened me to submit to your majesty some observations upon the present crisis." "There is no crisis; the present is a war purely political; you cannot judge of my position, nor of the general aspect of Europe. Since my marriage the lion has been thought to sleep; we shall see whether he does or not. Spain will fall as soon as I have annihilated the English influence at St. Petersburg; I wanted eight hundred thousand men, and I have them. All Europe follows in my train, and Europe is no more now than an old rotten w——, with whom I may do what I please with my eight hundred thousand men. Did you not formerly tell me that you thought genius con-

sisted in finding nothing impossible? Well, in six or eight months you shall see what things upon a vast scale can effect, when united to a power that can execute them. I am guided by the opinion of the army and the people rather than by yours, gentlemen who are too rich, and who only tremble for me because you apprehend a fall. Make yourselves easy; regard the Russian war as dictated by good sense, and by a just view of the interests, the repose, and the tranquillity of all. Besides, how can I help it, if an excess of power leads me to assume the dictatorship of the world? Have not you contributed to it, you and so many others who blame me now, and would make a king *debonnaire* of me. My destiny is not accomplished; I must finish that which is but as yet sketched. We must have an European code, an European court of appeal, the same coins, the same weights and measures, the same laws; I must amalgamate all the people of Europe into one, and Paris must be the capital of the world. Such, my Lord Duke, is the only termination which suits my ideas. At present you would not serve me well, because you imagine that everything is again to be placed in doubt; but, before twelve months are over, you will serve me with the same zeal and ardour as after the victories of Marengo and Austerlitz. You will see something superior to all that; and it is I who tell you so. Farewell, my Lord Duke; do not affect the interesting part of a man in disgrace, nor that of a censor, and place a little more confidence in me."

I withdrew quite thunderstruck, after having made a profound bow to the emperor, who turned his back upon me. Having recovered from the astonishment I felt at this singular conversation, I began to conjecture by what means the emperor could have been so exactly informed of the object of my proceedings. Not being able to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion, I hastened to Malouet, supposing that, perhaps, some involuntary indiscretion on his part had put the high police, or one of the emperor's confidants, upon

the scent. I explained myself; but soon convinced by the protestations of the most upright man in the empire that nothing had escaped him, I found the circumstance still more extraordinary, as I could not fix my suspicions upon a third person. How, then, could the emperor have learnt that it was my intention to present a memorial to him? Was I, then, spied in my own house? Suddenly a thought struck me; I recollected that one day a man had abruptly entered my room without giving my valet time to announce him, and had availed himself of some specious pretext to keep me in conversation. After having weighed all the circumstances, I inferred that he was an emissary; and upon a review of all that had taken place, my suspicions became still stronger. I made inquiries, and learnt that this man, whose name was B——, was a returned emigrant, who had purchased, near my seat, a small estate, for which he had not yet paid; that he was mayor of his commune; but was, to all appearance, an intriguer and an impostor. I procured some of his handwriting, and recognized it for that of an agent, formerly commissioned at London to be a spy upon the Bourbons, the emigrants of rank, and the Chouans. I had the number of correspondence; and this enabled me to find out from among the papers deposited in the *bureaux* of the police the reports of that worthy gentleman. One of my former confidential agents undertook to come at the fact, and succeeded. The affair was as follows:—

Savary, having been ordered by the emperor to inform him how the ex-minister Fouché employed his time at his seat at Ferrières, presented a first report, in which he said he was looking out for an agent sufficiently qualified to fulfil the intentions of his majesty. He, at the same time, observed to the emperor that the investigation was of a very delicate nature, the ex-minister being invisible to all strangers, nobody, not even the country people, having access into his house. After some research, Savary cast his eyes upon the Sieur B——. Having sent for this man,

who is tall, well made, of pleasing manner, and an insinuating character, cunning, adroit, possessing great volubility and an imperturbable assurance, he said to him, "Sir, you are mayor of your commune; you know the Duke of Otranto, or, at least, you have been in correspondence with him, and you must be able to form some idea of his character and habits; you must give me an account of what he is doing at Ferrières; this information is absolutely indispensable, for the emperor requires it." "My Lord," answered B——, "you have given me a commission extremely difficult to execute; I consider it as almost impossible. You know the man; he is mistrustful, suspicious, and constantly on his guard; besides, he is inaccessible; by what means or under what pretext can I gain an entrance into his house? Indeed, I cannot."—"It does not signify," answered the minister, "this commission, to which the emperor attaches great importance, must be executed; I expect you will procure me this intelligence as a proof of your devotion to the person of the emperor. Go, and do not return without having accomplished your object; I allow you a fortnight."

B——, in the greatest embarrassment, gave himself a great deal of trouble, made inquiries, and found, through an indirect channel, that one of my farmers was prosecuted by my steward for large arrears of rents. He called upon the man, and pretending to be extremely concerned for him, obtained from him the documents relative to the affair. Furnished with these papers, he took a cabriolet, and having dressed himself neatly, presented himself at the lodge of my château, announcing himself as the mayor of a neighbouring commune, who had taken a great interest in an unfortunate family, unjustly prosecuted. Being first stopped at the gate, he easily talked over my porter, who suffered him to reach the house. There my valet refused to let him enter my apartment. Without, however, being disheartened, B—— begged, solicited, and entreated so earnestly, that at last he obtained to be announced; but, at the moment

when the valet was opening the door of my closet, he pushed him on one side and entered ; I was at my writing-desk, with my pen in my hand.

The sudden entrance of a stranger surprised me ; I asked him what was his pleasure : " My Lord," said B——, " I am come to solicit from you a favour, an act of justice and humanity the most urgent ; I am come to entreat you to save an unhappy father of a family from total ruin ; " and here he employed all his rhetoric to interest me in favour of his client, and explained the whole affair to me in the clearest manner possible. After a moment's hesitation, I rose and proceeded to search in a box for the papers relative to my farms. Whilst, my back being turned, I was searching for the documents, B——, still speaking on, succeeded in deciphering backwards a few lines of my writing ; and what particularly struck him were the initials, *V. M. I. et R. ;* which, being in capital letters, were more striking ; he immediately inferred that I was preparing a memorial to be presented to his majesty. Upon returning to my desk, after two or three minutes' search, and won by the fine speeches of the man, I settled the affair with him in favour of his client, with the utmost simplicity ; and dismissed him, expressing my thanks to him for having given me an opportunity of performing a praiseworthy action. B—— left me, and immediately proceeded to Savary, to whom he related the success of his undertaking, and Savary instantly hastened to make his report to the emperor. I confess that, when made acquainted with the details of this piece of mystification, I was extremely vexed at it. I could scarcely forgive myself for having been duped by a scoundrel, who for a long time had sent me secret intelligence from London, and in whose favour I ordered the annual payment of a sum of twenty thousand francs. It will be seen later (in 1815), that I did not allow myself to be actuated by too great resentment.

Although this was a wretched intrigue, I yet derived from

it an advantageous position which gave me more security and confidence, by making me persevere in my system of circumspection and reserve. It was evident that a great part of Napoleon's suspicions respecting me was dissipated, and that I had no longer any reason to apprehend, at the moment that he was about to penetrate into Russia, being made the object of any inquisitorial and vexatious measure. I knew that in a cabinet council, to which the emperor had only summoned Berthier, Cambacérès, and Duroc, the question had been discussed whether it would be advantageous to make sure, either by arrest or severe banishment, of M. de Talleyrand and me ; and that upon mature consideration, the idea of this *coup d'état* had been rejected as impolitic and useless ; impolitic, inasmuch as it would have shaken public confidence too much, and aroused apprehensions, for the future, in the minds of the high officers and dignitaries of the state ; useless, because no act or deed could be laid to our charge as a motive for such a measure. Engaged, moreover, in the preparations for the expedition into Russia, the government experienced, from another cause, uneasiness more real, and disappointments more distressing. France was daily suffering more and more from a scarcity of corn. Riots had taken place in several places ; these had been repressed by force, and military commissions had condemned to be shot many unfortunate wretches who had been urged on by despair. It was not without feelings of horror that the public ascertained that, among the victims of these bloody executions, a woman in the town of Caen had been included.

It became, however, necessary to withdraw a part of the veil which concealed the mystery of the vast hostile preparations, of which all the north of Germany was already the theatre. An extraordinary sitting of the senate was ordered, for the purpose of receiving the communication of two reports which were supposed to have been presented to the emperor ; the one by the minister for foreign affairs, the

other by the minister at war. The sole object of this farce, at once warlike and diplomatic, was to obtain a levy of such men as had escaped the conscription, and the formation of cohorts of the first ban, according to a new organization of the national guard, which divided into three bands or three classes the immense majority of our male population.

There was no exaggeration this time in considering France as one vast camp, whence our phalanxes marched, from all parts, upon Europe as upon a prey. In order to colour this levy of those classes which had been free from the conscription, fresh motives and new pretexts were necessary, since it was not desirable, for the moment, to reveal the true cause of such extraordinary measures. Maret spoke to the senate of the necessity of compelling England to acknowledge the maritime rights established by the stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht—stipulations which France had abandoned to Amiens. But the levy of the first ban of the national guards was granted by a *senatus-consultum*, and a hundred cohorts were placed at the disposal of the government; we members of the senate evinced admirable docility and subserviency. At the same time, two treaties of alliance and reciprocal assistance were signed with Prussia and Austria. All doubt was now removed. Napoleon was about to attack Russia, not only with his own forces, but also with those of Germany, and of all the petty sovereigns who could no longer move out of the orbit of his power.

War was fully decided upon, when the emperor caused his confidential minister to open fresh negotiations with London; but these proposals not only came late, but were made without any ability. Some persons, who were in the secret of every intrigue, assured me, at that time, that the cabinet employed this clumsy expedient, in concert with the principal Russians of the French party; seeing themselves on the eve of being expelled from the councils of St. Petersburg, they had imagined that the Emperor Alexander, alarmed at the idea of the possibility of an arrangement between France

and England, would re-enter the continental system to prevent his being isolated, and that he would once more submit to Napoleon's will. But however this may be, Maret wrote to Lord Castlereagh a letter containing the following proposals :—To renounce all extension of territory on the side of the Pyrenees, to declare the *actual dynasty* of Spain independent, and to guarantee the independence of that monarchy ; to guarantee to the house of Braganza the independence and integrity of Portugal, as well as the kingdom of Naples to Joachim, and the kingdom of Sicily to Ferdinand IV. As to the other objects of discussion, our cabinet proposed to negotiate them upon this basis ; that each power should keep what the other could not wrest from it by the war. Lord Castlereagh replied, that if by the *actual dynasty* of Spain the brother of the chief of the French government was meant, he was commanded by his sovereign to declare candidly, that he could not receive any proposals of peace founded upon that basis. Here the matter dropped. Ashamed of its overtures, our cabinet, whose only object was to have drawn Russia into some act of weakness, perceived too late that it had impressed upon our diplomacy a character of fickleness, bad faith, and ignorance.

As all was transacted in the utmost secrecy, what most puzzled the politicians was, that in France, and even in Russia, the exterior forms of amity were kept, although making immense preparations. The Emperor Alexander's ambassador was still at Paris, while Napoleon had his at St. Petersburg : nor was this all ; Alexander had his confidential diplomatist, Count Czernitscheff, resident in the French capital. This amiable Russian, in the midst of the dissipations of a brilliant court, and the mysteries of many amorous intrigues purposely ill-managed, did not neglect a more secret commission of the highest importance to his master. Seconded by women, some of whom were stimulated by love and others by a spirit of intrigue, he managed his plans so as to discover Napoleon's real intentions of in-

vading Russia. Suspicion having been raised as to the secret object of his mission, he was watched and spied, but all to no purpose. At length, Savary sent to him a person attached to the police, who gave him some false information, and drew from him, in return, some fresh indications which increased the suspicions already existing. But, favoured by his love affairs, Czernitscheff was warned in time ; he avoided the snare, ill-used the spy, and went to Maret to complain of having been subjected to such revolting proceedings. That very day, the emperor having been informed of the subject of his complaint, determined upon communicating to him the secret accounts which inculpated him. Czernitscheff came out triumphant from this ordeal by giving an explanation of his conduct and of the cause of his complaints. The police received formal orders to take off the *surveillance.* Being thus at liberty to continue his investigations, he succeeded in executing the object of his mission. He was particularly anxious to procure the lists of the intended movements of the French army ; these he obtained through the medium of a clerk belonging to the *Bureau des Mouvemens*, named Michel. An imprudence of this person, who thus betrayed the secret of the emperor's operations, having awakened some suspicions, he was arrested. Czernitscheff was immediately informed of it, and left Paris with the greatest precipitation, carrying off with him the most important documents. In vain was a telegraphic order given to seize his person ; he had got the start by five or six hours, and this advantage was sufficient to enable him to cross the Rhine. He had just passed the bridge of Kehl, when the telegraphic order for his arrest reached Strasburg.

His precipitate flight from Paris prevented him from burning his secret correspondence, which it was his custom to conceal under the carpet of his room ; and as the latter was necessarily the object of minute search, the police agents discovered the papers of Czernitscheff. The first thing found in them was the proof that a great intimacy had been kept

up between this Russian nobleman and several ladies of Napoleon's court ; amongst others, the Duchess of R——. She, however, it is said, exculpated herself by alleging that she had acted in concert with her husband, to endeavour to ascertain the secret object of Czernitscheff's mission. Among the papers discovered, was also a letter in Michel's handwriting ; so convincing a proof of his guilt sealed his fate,—he expiated his treason with his life. This affair brought to light a very singular fact, viz., that the Russian cabinet had foreseen, even from the epoch of the interview at Erfurt, the possibility of a rupture with France. It was then that Romanzoff said, in order to justify his indulgent politics, and in speaking of Napoleon : *We must wear him out.* (*Il faut l'user.*)

The circumstances of Czernitscheff's flight, which was soon known in the saloons, made considerable noise, and accelerated the rupture. The emperor, whose departure was determined upon, anxious to obtain some popularity, visited the different parts of Paris, examining the public works, and acting little preconcerted scenes, either with the prefect of Paris, or the prefect of police, Pasquier. He also went frequently hunting, affecting to appear more occupied with his pleasures than with the vast enterprise he had engaged in. I saw him at St. Cloud, whither I went to pay my respects to him, without any intention of soliciting or obtaining an audience. The mournful aspect of that court, and the anxious looks of the courtiers, appeared to me to form a strong contrast with the confidence of the emperor. He had never enjoyed such perfect health ; never had I seen his features, formed after the antique, lighted up with a greater glow of mental vigour, of greater confidence in himself, founded on a deep conviction of his prodigious power. I experienced a feeling of involuntary melancholy, which I should have been unable to define, had not the most gloomy presentiments taken possession of my mind.

In the meantime the cabinet of St. Petersburg, whether

its real intention was to employ every possible means of reconciliation compatible with the independence of the Russian empire, or whether it had only the intention of obtaining some certain information respecting the true intentions of Napoleon, ordered the Prince Kourakin to make known to the French government the bases of an arrangement, which his sovereign was willing to accede to. These were the deliverance of Prussia, a reduction of the garrison of Dantzic, and the evacuation of Swedish Pomerania ; upon these conditions, the Czar engaged to make no alterations whatever in the measures prohibiting a direct trade with England, and to concert, with France, a system of licences to be established in Russia.

Kourakin's note remained unanswered for a fortnight. At length, on the 9th of May, the day of the Emperor's departure for Germany, Maret asked Kourakin if he had full powers for treating ; Kourakin replied, that the character of ambassador, with which he was invested, should be considered as sufficient. Being only able to obtain evasive and dilatory answers, he demanded his passports, which were refused him under various pretences. It was not till the 20th of June they were sent him from Thorn, an artifice, the object of which was to allow Napoleon time to cross the Niemen with all his forces, in order to surprise his august adversary at Wilna, before he could receive the least intelligence from his ambassador.

The die was cast : the Niemen was crossed by six hundred thousand men, by the finest and most formidable army ever assembled by any conqueror of the earth. We will now leave Napoleon,—we will leave this illustrious madman to rush on to his ruin : it is not his military history I am relating.

Let us ascertain the state of public opinion, at the moment, when traversing Germany, and stopping at Dresden, he riveted upon himself the anxious regards of twenty nations. Let us first see what was thought of him in the

salons of Paris, those very *salons* for whose good opinion he was so anxious ; wishes were there expressed for his humiliation, and even for his fall, so much did his aggression appear the affect of a mad ambition. In the middling and lower classes, the public disposition was not more favourable to him. The discontent, however, had nothing of hostility in it. The general wish was only to save Napoleon from his own follies, and to restrain him within the bounds of moderation and justice.

Some persons thought that combined resistance, on the part of his marshals and the army, would succeed in ruling his will, and, eventually, in obtaining the mastery over him. But such persons could understand but little the fascinations of a military life, and the manners of a camp. I had had the means of being convinced that the least political idea, calculated to guarantee us from the abuses of victory, or from the dangers of a reverse, never proceeded from the brains of a discontented general.

There was, moreover, at the bottom of all this spirit of disapprobation, a feeling superior to it ; that of an anxious expectation and intense curiosity respecting the issue of the vast expedition of the extraordinary man whose ambition devoured whole ages. It was generally admitted that he would remain the conqueror and master of the field.

As to politicians, by taking into consideration the destruction of Poland, on the one hand, and the encroachments of the revolution on the other, they saw Germany destroyed by two vast irruptions ; that of the French from the west, and the Russians from the east. It was these latter that Napoleon wished to drive back upon the polar ices, or into the Steppes of Asia. That man, whom nothing could stop, who drew after him one half of the military population of Europe, and whose orders were implicitly executed, on a space which embraced nineteen degrees of latitude, and thirty degrees of longitude,—that man, who had now set

foot on Russian ground, was about to risk his own fate, and the existence of France.

Upon advancing beyond the Niemen, and proclaiming war, he exclaimed, with an affectation of prophetic inspiration—"The Russians are urged on by fate—let the destinies be accomplished!" His adversary, who dared not to wait for him at Wilna, more calm, recommended to his people to defend their *country and their liberty.* What a contrast between the two nations, between these two adversaries and their language!

At first, the forced retreat of the Russians, who, everywhere the weakest and least inured to war, endeavoured to avoid the rencontre; and the devastation of the country, which they systematically effected, were considered as two grand measures, the result of a plan preconcerted for the purpose of drawing Napoleon into the heart of the empire.

But the imagination soon took the alarm when, after a furious combat, Napoleon, against the advice of the majority of his marshals, and in contempt of a kind of engagement he had entered into at Paris with his council, left in his rear Smolensko, the only bulwark of Russia on the frontiers of Poland. The anxiety was still further increased, when he was seen advancing, without the least hesitation, on the line of Moscow, braving all the chances of war, and equally regardless of the character of his enemies, the disposition of Europe impatient of her yoke, the season, the distance, and the severity of the climate.

Inflated with gaining the most sanguinary battle of modern times, a battle in which a hundred thousand soldiers were victims to the ambition of one man,[1] and not in the least affected by the miserable and wretched appearance of his bivouacs, Napoleon imagined that he could, at length, effect the destruction of a vast and powerful empire, as he

[1] The battle of Moskowa, or Borodino, fought on the 7th of September, at twenty-five leagues in advance of Moscow.—*Editor's Note.*

formerly accomplished, as it were extempore, the fall of the republics of Geneva, Venice, and Lucca.

The Russians had retreated, armed with torches; they had burnt Smolensko, Dorigobni, Viazma, Ghjat, and Mojaisk, and yet he imagined they would reserve Moscow for him. The conflagration of this fine capital, while it undeceived Napoleon too late, enlightened France with its ill-omened flames; the sensation was deep. It was then, alas! that I saw all my presentiments realized; I perceived its object; that of depriving the victor of a pledge, and the vanquished of a motive, for concluding peace.

How did Napoleon act upon witnessing this grand national sacrifice? He encamped for forty days on the ashes of Moscow, contemplating his vain conquest, not doubting his ability to conclude the campaign by negotiations, and never even suspecting that two Russian armies, the one from the Livonian Gulf, the other from Moldavia, had been ordered to effect a junction at Borisow, a place one hundred leagues in his rear. He was ignorant, perhaps, that Russia, without a single ally at the commencement of the campaign, had just signed, one after the other, three defensive treaties—with Sweden, England, and the Regency of Cadiz.

In the interval, the interview at Abo, between the Emperor Alexander and Bernadotte, in presence of Lord Cathcart, took place—an interview where the first appeal was made to Moreau, whom they wished to oppose to his persecutor, to him who was now designated the oppressor of Europe. The ruins of Moscow had been abandoned to Napoleon, who could not at all comprehend a system of warfare so different from his own strategy. For twenty-two days he awaited a suppliant message from the Russian emperor, whose cabinet kept in play his prolocutors and negotiators. Napoleon was as blind at Moscow as in Spain. Prudent measures smacked too much of methodical arrangement, which he utterly detested.

At length, he commenced his retreat, but not till the

fatal hour had struck; for on the very day of his tardy evacuation of Moscow, the 13th of October, the Malet conspiracy, so humiliating for the emperor, for his adherents, and his police, burst out; a conspiracy which had nearly cost him his empire, from the wish of gratifying his vanity in dating a few decrees from Moscow. The Malet conspiracy has never been well understood;—Malet was not a mad, but a bold, man.

Little known as a general, he was at first involved, in 1802, in the Senate conspiracy, as it was called, of which Bernadotte was the soul, Madame de Staël the focus, and himself the principal agent; a conspiracy in which I was myself denounced as an accomplice, by Dubois, the prefect of police. It became necessary to throw the whole culpability on Malet. He was put in prison. Upon being restored to liberty, by the amnesty granted on the occasion of the coronation, he was employed, in 1805, in the army of Italy; and, upon his return, was engaged in fresh plots against the emperor, involving at one time Brune, at another Masséna; at length, in 1808, he was imprisoned in the castle of Vincennes. It was in the gloom of this prison that he hatched his double conspiracy, which was to rally the disaffected of every party against the emperor's government. The whole of this plot, however, was not the offspring of Malet's brain.[1] Its conception belonged to royalists, its execution to the republicans. In fact, success was impossible without an understanding between the two opposite opinions, cemented by a common hatred, and a mutual want of overthrowing the oppressor in order to restore public liberty. All was favourable to the conspirators engaged in the boldest of enterprises. From the instant that the mode of execution depended only upon one man, and that man was determined, full of resolution and courage, there was every reason to calculate upon the probability of success. The rest was left to chance. Let us demonstrate it; and, first, let us consider into what hands

[1] This deserves attention.—*Editor's Note.*

the power was delegated in the emperor's absence. It is certain that the arch-chancellor, Cambacérès, was the depositary of it; a cowardly and disgraced man, and a true sycophant. Among the ministers, one alone prided himself, because he was at the head of the police, which for him remained mute as to any discoveries; but this man, a severe officer of *gendarmerie*, was a mere cypher in politics and state affairs. Next on the list, was Pasquier, prefect of police, an excellent magistrate in all that regarded mud and lanterns, in regulating the police of the markets, gambling-houses, and prostitutes, but without intelligence, extremely verbose, and entirely devoid of tact and power of investigation. So much for the civil power.

We will now proceed to the military: the strength of the sword was entrusted to Hullin, commander of Paris, a dull, heavy soldier, but firm, although equally stupid and awkward in politics as the others. Let it be observed, that the exercise of authority having become, for the principal functionaries, a kind of mechanism, they saw nothing but passive obedience; that the Empress Maria-Louisa resided at St. Cloud; that, at this time, in the garrison of Paris, there were none of those old fanatical troops, who, in the name of the emperor, would have carried fire and sword everywhere: that they had been replaced by cohorts recently organized, the greater part of which were commanded by old patriotic officers; and, lastly, that the anxiety, respecting the event of the Muscovite expedition, began to make the high functionaries apprehensive for their security. It is evident, therefore, that Paris, in this state of things would, by an ably directed and vigorous *coup de main*, remain in possession of the first that seized it. The immense distance of the emperor, the irregularity and frequent interruption of the couriers, by increasing the anxiety and preparing the public mind, threw all the chances in favour of the person who should be daring enough to take advantage of a momentary stupor and alarm. The *emperor is dead;* the abolishment of the imperial

government by a senatorial decree, and the establishment of a provisionary one, were the pivot of the conspiracy, of which the mover and the head was Malet. He had himself drawn up the *senatus consultum*, decreeing the abolition of the imperial government.

But it may be said, you see there was no decree of the senate, there was no provisionary government, the emperor was full of life and vigour, and the conspiracy was only founded in a fiction. Now, how could Malet have accomplished it, supposing even that he had remained master of Paris?

It is true, there was no decree of the senate; but it is equally certain, that there was not in the senate a nucleus of opposition, which might have been made to act *according to the circumstances*. I lay it down as a fact, that, out of one hundred and thirty senators, nearly sixty,[1] who were generally led by M. de Talleyrand, M. de Semonville and me, would have seconded any resolution which would have a salutary object, upon the mere manifestation of an understanding between these three influential men. Now such a coalition was neither improbable, nor impracticable.

This possibility explains the creation of an eventual provisional government composed of Messrs. Mathiew de Montmorency, Alexis de Noailles, General Moreau, Count Frochot, prefect of the Seine, and a fifth not named. This fifth person was M. de Talleyrand, and I myself was to fill the place of Moreau during his absence, whose name had been introduced either to satisfy or divide the army.

As to Malet, a mere instrument, he would voluntarily have resigned the command of Paris to Masséna, who, as well as myself, lived at that time in retirement and disgrace.

But answer, it may be said, this last and strongest objection—the emperor was living!—True, but it should be

[1] The same, no doubt, who eighteen months after, on the 2nd of April, 1814, had the *courage*, protected by two hundred thousand bayonets, to declare Napoleon *fallen from the throne.—Note of the Editor.*

recollected how the imperial revolution which overthrew Nero was effected (although I do not mean to establish a parallel between the two characters). It was operated with the assistance of false rumours and alarms, by a servile, but suddenly unshackled, senate. Where was Napoleon at the moment when Malet made his *coup de main?* He was evacuating Moscow; he was commencing his disastrous retreat, which had only been foreseen, but which once ascertained for a fact, would have decided the general defection, if fifteen or twenty people of note had replaced, in the name of *the safety of France*, the first movers of the conspiracy. Let it be recollected that the couriers and bulletins were already intercepted; that the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh bulletins, announcing the evacuation and the retreat, and dated the 23rd of October, were only followed by the twenty-eighth, dated the 11th of November; being an interval of twenty days, which would have amply sufficed to ensure the success of a plot, the ramifications of which will, for a long time, remain unknown. For a month, nothing was heard of but a continual succession of disasters, the knowledge of which alone might have closed the gates of France against the emperor for ever. At first believed to be dead, he would only have been resuscitated, to be again struck down by the decree of his forfeiture. Never did a more favourable opportunity present itself for the overthrow of his military dictatorship; never would it have been more easy to have established the basis of a government which would have reconciled us with ourselves and with Europe. This supposition being admitted, how many fresh calamities would France have been spared?

Now let us examine what were the causes of Malet's failure, in the midst even of his triumph. Shall I say it? It was for having regulated his means of execution upon a basis too widely philanthropic. We will explain. Malet, a republican, belonging, as well as Guidal and Lahorie, his accomplices, to the secret society of the Philadelphians, was

justly apprehensive lest he should revive the alarm of the return of those sanguinary and mournful days which France remembered with horror. This moral conviction overcame every more decisive consideration, and instead of immediately putting to death Savary, Hullin, and the two adjutants, Doucet and Laborde, the leaders of the staff, Malet thought it would be sufficient to arrest them, without effusion of blood. He at first succeeded, with respect to the police, which was disorganized the moment that Savary and Pasquier permitted themselves to be surprised and ignominiously dragged to prison. But when Hullin's resistance had forced Malet to discharge his pistols, his hesitation lost him, not being able to fire at the same time upon Hullin and Laborde. The latter, being at liberty, had time to rally a few men round him, and rushing upon Malet, disarmed and arrested him. The conspiracy failed. Malet died with great *sang froid*, carrying with him the secret of one of the boldest *coups de main* which the grand epocha of our revolution bequeaths to history.

The facility with which this surprise of power was effected seemed to indicate that it was not unexpected. All was prepared at the *Hôtel de Ville*, for the installation of the provisionary government. Pale and trembling, the arch-chancellor remained, till ten o'clock in the morning, a prey to the most dreadful alarms, at one moment imagining he was about to be killed, at another, that he should at least share the dungeon with Savary. As to the people, it is true they did nothing for the success of an enterprise at first enveloped in the shades of night; but they indirectly seconded it by that *vis inertiæ* which is always opposed to bad governments. In short, although it had failed, this conspiracy was a home-thrust to Napoleon's dynasty, by revealing a secret, fatal to its founder, his family, and his adherents; viz., that his political establishment would end with his life.

It was at Smolensko, on the 14th or 16th of November,

that the emperor, amid the horrors of his retreat, received the first information of the conspiracy, and the prompt punishment of its authors. He was much troubled at it. "What an impression," said he, "that will make in France!" Savary and Cambacérès urged him to keep a strict eye upon the army, in which plots were formed against his life. Extraordinary precautions were immediately taken; a sacred band of officers most devoted to him was formed, the command of which was intrusted to Grouchy; but this chosen body was soon involved in the general wreck. Jealous, in the extreme, of all that could menace his throne, Napoleon felt far more anxiety to preserve that than to save the wrecks of his army, the retreat of which he hurried on at any cost. Thanks to the unskilful pursuit of Kutusow, he gained three days' march upon the Russians, arrived at the Berezina, eluded the generals of the Moldavian army, and, under protection of a most horrible disaster, gained the opposite bank. The whole army in the meantime was completely disbanded; the only remains which could here and there be perceived of it were wandering spectres, sinking under the severity of cold, fatigue, and wretchedness. Napoleon, having made up his mind to end, as a fugitive, an expedition which was going to deprive him of his laurels as a general, and tear him from his reputation as a statesman, betook himself to flight in a sledge, and intrusted himself solely to Caulaincourt's devotedness; disguised, and with the utmost haste, he made for Paris, where everything conspired to make him tremble for the loss of his crown. At Warsaw he himself revealed to his ambassador his situation, and the state of his mind, by those well-known words: "From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but a step." Ever agitated with the fear of never reaching France, he strove to surmount danger by the rapidity of his flight, traversing the whole of Germany in an impenetrable incognito. In Silesia he was very nearly taken by the Prussians; and at Dresden he only escaped a plot for his

seizure because Lord Walpole, who was at Vienna, dared not give the signal.

And as if fortune had wished to pursue him to extremities, he re-entered the palace of the Tuileries on the 18th of December, the day after the publication of his twenty-ninth bulletin, which carried mourning into so many families. But this was, on his part, a new snare, held out to the devotedness and credulity of a generous nation; who, struck with consternation, thought that their chief, chastened by misfortune, was ready to seize the first favourable opportunity of bringing back peace, and of, at length, consolidating the foundation of general happiness.

This was the reason why France willingly made the greatest sacrifices to support a man whose only success had been to tread the ashes of Moscow, and carry desolation into a vast extent of country, which he had left covered with the corpses of a hundred and fifty thousand of his own subjects, and those of his allies, after abandoning a still greater number of prisoners and the whole of his artillery and magazines. Of four hundred thousand men in arms who had crossed the Niemen, scarcely thirty thousand repassed that river five months afterwards, and, of those, two-thirds had not seen the Kremlin.

Napoleon, however, appeared at first far less concerned on account of the loss of his army than about the conspiracy which had revealed so fatal a secret as the fragility of the foundation of his empire. Tormented by the idea of his death having been anticipated, his careworn brow appeared bending beneath clouds of gloom; the conspiracy was the object of his first words, his first inquiries. He closeted himself with Cambacérès, and sifted him narrowly in a long and secret conversation. Savary was next sent for, whom he overwhelmed with questions and reproaches; he afterwards gave audience to several members of his council, and appeared still wholly occupied with the conspiracy, while his ministers and agents were in the utmost alarm. But his

police, being interested in representing the plot as an isolated one, affirmed that the whole of it originated in Malet; such was also the opinion of Cambacérès, of the minister at war, and of the confidential advisers, who confirmed Napoleon in the idea that the greatest danger he had to fear, and against which he should be on his guard, was in the reminiscences of the republic. Enraged with the prefect of the Seine, a pupil of Mirabeau's, and whom we have seen bending before the conspirators, he issued a Philippic against *pusillanimous magistrates*, who, said he, "are the destruction of the empire, of the laws, and of the throne. Our fathers had for their rallying cry, *The king is dead: long live the king!* A few words," added Napoleon, "containing the principal advantages of monarchy." All the bodies of the state immediately came to assure him of their present and future fidelity. Lacépède, the speaker of the senate, designating the body to which he belonged as *the first council of the emperor*, added with great rapidity, "whose authority exists only when the monarch requires it and gives it movement." This allusion to the spring of which Malet had availed himself, struck the senators very forcibly. In his answer to the council of state, Napoleon, attributing all the misfortunes which *beautiful France had undergone* to *ideology* (gloomy metaphysics), took occasion to cast reflections upon philosophy and liberty. He did not perceive that by ceasing to keep up the revolution and its principles, he ceased to command its aid and support; and that by preaching up the maxims of monarchical legitimacy, he was opening to the Bourbons the ways which the revolution had closed against them. And yet, in great crises, the Bourbons were ever uppermost in his thoughts. Besides what I have myself seen and heard of him in this respect, I was at this time made acquainted with the following fact. Ney, when relating to me the disasters of the retreat, and putting the firmness of his own military conduct in opposition to the want of foresight and stupor of Napoleon, added, that he

observed in him a kind of mental aberration. "I thought him mad," said Ney to me: "when, struck with the greatness of his misfortune, at the moment of his departure he said to us, like a man who saw himself utterly deprived of all resource, '*The Bourbons would get out of this:*'"—an observation, the sense of which escaped Ney, who was incapable of combining two political ideas.

Napoleon's object, therefore, now was, to establish the superiority of the *fourth dynasty* over the *third*, and to surmount the crisis. All the different bodies of the state were now seen engaged in resolving a new question of public right, in consequence of the impulse they had received from the cabinet, and of the first words which fell from their master's lips. "I will," said he to them, "reflect upon the different epochas of *our* history." Every one immediately began thinking of the means of securing the hereditary possession. The different speakers hastened to develop and explain the new doctrine; nothing was now heard of but succession, legitimate rights; these were the theme of all public speeches. "The king of Rome," said they, "must be crowned upon the express request of the senate, and a solemn oath must, in anticipation, unite the empire to the successor to the throne."

Such was the measure upon which the man relied, who, indebted to the revolution for a vast power, the magic of which he had just destroyed, renounced that very revolution, and separated himself from it. He, however, felt all the instability of a throne, the sole support of which is the sword.

Whilst he was thus exclaiming against the men and the principles of the revolution, he recollected me, me against whom he had indulged so much suspicious jealousy. Besides, could he ever pardon me the warnings I had given him, and my importunate foresight? I was informed that he had instituted a secret inquiry respecting my conduct connected with Malet's affair; but that all the reports had agreed as to my circumspection and non-participation in it. Unable to

reach me, he wounded me in the person of my friend, M. Malouet, whom he never pardoned for having openly visited me during my disgrace, this undisguised friendship between a revolutionary and a royalist patriot making him more uneasy ; besides, he was irritated against him on account of the spirit of opposition which Malouet evinced in the discussion at the council-board, against so many extravagant and vexatious measures. Being removed from the council of state, Malouet was exiled to Tours, where he led the life of a philosopher, less affected by his own disgrace than by the evils which afflicted his country. His disgrace was to me an additional motive to persist in the same reserve towards a government, which in its despair, in its vengeance, might be restrained by no consideration. Its power already began to totter, and experienced eyes could perceive the elements of its destruction. But seconded by his intimate councillors, Napoleon employed every artifice calculated to palliate our disasters, and conceal from us their inevitable consequences. He assembled the whole phalanx of his flatterers, now become the organs of his will ; he tutored them, and all, with one voice, attributed the loss of our army, and the fatal issue of the campaign, solely to the rigour of the elements. By the aid of deception of every kind, they succeeded in making it be believed that all might be repaired if the nation did but show itself great and generous ; that fresh sacrifices could not cost her anything when weighed against the preservation of its independence and glory. The public spirit was stimulated by addresses, begged of the chief of cohorts of the first bans of the national guards, who requested to march against the enemy out of France, and also by offers from the departments and communes to furnish cavalry, offers commanded by the government itself. Napoleon endeavoured, at the same time, to gain over new creatures to his interest, and to secure vacillating affections ; he distributed secret bribes drawn from his own treasures, which he had already diminished by

nearly a hundred millions, for his expenses in the Russian war. This time he distributed his riches with a lavish hand, for the double purpose of creating a new army, and of keeping in pay the ministers of certain cabinets, in order to maintain them in his interests. It was in his treasures that he found an army of reserve.

In the meantime he held privy councils, which were attended by Cambacérès, Lebrun, Talleyrand, Champagny, Maret, and Caulaincourt. Maret, who had arrived from Berlin, affirmed that he had received from the Prussian ministers, and from the king himself, the strongest protestations that they would persevere in our alliance; he added, that every circumstance ought to set the emperor's mind at ease, respecting the affairs of the north. Whether Maret really spoke sincerely, or whether all was concerted for the purpose of spurring on the council, which leaned towards negotiations, Napoleon, affecting greater confidence, said, that he could rely upon Austria, and, according to all appearance, upon Prussia; that consequently there was nothing alarming in his situation; that besides he found his brother Joseph again at Madrid, and the English driven back into Portugal; in addition to which, he had already under arms one hundred cohorts, and the anticipated levy of the conscripts 1813. He decided that the Spanish war and that of the north should be carried on together.

On the other hand, the contents of Otto's [1] correspondence got wind; it was known that Lord Walpole had made Austria the most brilliant offers; that he had represented all Germany as ready to rise, and France on the eve of a revolution. Otto added that the defection of Austria might be expected. But this cabinet, being soon informed that Napoleon had again seized the reins of power, that he was making fresh levies, and that, in the interior, there was no appearance of a crisis, hastened to despatch to Paris Count Bubna. Otto also changed his tone, and his letters were in

[1] Napoleon's ambassador at Vienna.

perfect unison with the assertions of Austria, whom he represented as only desirous of interfering, as mediator, for a general pacification.

Full of confidence, Napoleon gave the word to his official organ, the *Moniteur;* according to its representations, "Austria and France are inseparable, no continental power will detach her from him; besides, forty millions of Frenchmen have nothing to fear. . . . If it be desired to know," adds he, "the conditions to which I would subscribe for a general peace, reference must be made to the letter written by the Duke of Bassano to Lord Castlereagh, previous to the campaign of Russia;" which was equivalent to saying that he consented, as if he had experienced no reverse at Moscow, to leave Sicily to Ferdinand IV., and Portugal to the house of Braganza, but that no other sacrifice was to be required of him.

The news of the defection of a Prussian corps, commanded by Yorck, having arrived, "What sufficed yesterday," cried Napoleon, "is not sufficient to-day;" and all his councillors perceived that very instant what use was to be made of such an event. Maret drew up a report, stuffed, according to custom, with invectives against the British government, and concluding by proposing a levy of three hundred and fifty thousand men. Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely hastened to the senate, and, in the name of the emperor, required the service of the young Frenchmen forming the hundred cohorts, and who had been assured that they should only be required to attend military games and martial exercises in the interior; a *senatus consultum* placed them at the disposal of the emperor.

The legislative body was assembled, in order to vote the supplies. "Peace," said Napoleon, in his opening speech, "is necessary to the world; but I will never make but one honourable and consonant to the *greatness* of my empire." Nothing could be more pompous than the *exposé* of his situation presented by Montalivet, the minister of the

interior ; everything, population, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, public instruction, and even the navy, was in the most flourishing and prosperous condition. Then came the presentation of the budget by Count Molé, councillor of state ; and here the worthy pupil of Fontanes, astonished at so much prosperity, exclaimed, in concluding his speech, "To produce so many wonders, twelve years' war and one single man sufficed!" And immediately eleven hundred and fifty millions were, without discussion, placed at the disposal of this one man.

He had reckoned, among the urgent affairs, the accommodation of his differences with the pope, who, since the month of June, had been confined to the palace of Fontainebleau. Under pretence of a hunting party, Napoleon hastened to extort from him a new *concordat*, despoiling him of his temporalities, but which the holy father retracted almost immediately afterwards. Religious matters became in consequence more and more embroiled.

The open defection of Prussia no longer left any doubts upon the progress of the coalition. Frederick William, suddenly quitting Berlin, had fled to Breslau, protected by the good-nature of our ambassador, Saint Marsan, and in some degree under the ægis of Augereau, who had suffered himself to be *humanized*. Nothing could exceed the *benignity* of our generals and our ambassadors since our reverses. Upon receiving the news that the King of Prussia had escaped him, Napoleon regretted he had not treated him as he had done Ferdinand VII. and the pope. "This is not the first instance," said he, "that in politics, generosity is a bad counsellor." He generous towards Prussia!!!

In the meantime, the reflux of the war, rushing from the ruins of Moscow, proceeded rapidly towards the Oder and the Elbe. Eugène, who had rallied a few thousand men, had successively retired upon the Walthe, the Oder, the Sprée, the Elbe, and the Saale. The German insurrection, excited by the secret societies, spread itself from town to

town, and from village to village, and the number of Napoleon's enemies daily increased. How could we depend upon our allies? From the defection of Prussia, we had reason to anticipate that of many others. Determined to face everything, Napoleon, like a spendthrift, demanding, in advance, his revenue of men, ordered the conscription of 1814 to be put at his disposal. He and his favourites flattered themselves with raising an army of a thousand battalions, presenting an effective force of eight hundred thousand men, and four hundred squadrons, or one hundred thousand horse; in all, a million of soldiers to feed and pay. He lulled himself with this flattering chimera, and his ministers already demanded an additional sum of three hundred millions.

On the other hand, one hundred and sixty thousand conscripts were wandering about the country, deserting from their standards, and protected by the disaffected spirit of the provinces. Napoleon dreaded this silent rebellion to military law, to which nothing but leaders were wanting, but who would be found ready when the opportunity required presented itself: what did he do? By the most artful of plans, he collected together, in a guard of honour, ten thousand young men, selected from the richest and most illustrious families; these were as so many hostages of their parents' loyalty.

The mediation of Austria being unsuccessful, Napoleon again endeavoured to open a direct communication with the English ministry; for this purpose, he despatched the banker Labouchère, who, however, did not meet with a more favourable reception than he did in my time. On her side, Prussia, who had just entered into alliance with Russia, proposed an armistice, upon condition that Napoleon would content himself with the line of the Elbe, and would cede all the places on the Oder and the Vistula. In our cabinet, a party persisted in affirming that peace was still possible; M. de Talleyrand said, that we still had it in our power not

to fight; Lebrun and Caulaincourt were likewise of opinion that the offer of Prussia should be accepted, and that negotiations should be entered upon. But how could Napoleon be persuaded to give up the fortresses? He could not make up his mind to cede anything by negotiation. "Let them take what they can from me," said he, "but I will not give up anything."

He made his journals say, "Spain belongs to the French dynasty; no human effort can hinder it." Being informed on the 31st of March that the Russians had begun to cross the Elbe, he, himself, declared, through the medium of these same journals, "that the enemy's batteries, placed on the heights of Montmartre, could never make him yield an inch of territory."

And yet he received, from every quarter, pacific councils and useful advice.

I was hurt to see M. de Talleyrand, if not restored to favour, at least recalled to the council-board, whilst I remained inactive and in disgrace. I perceived the reason of it to be the impression which the Malet plot, to which a republican and liberal colour had affectedly been given, had left; it might also be imputed to my remonstrances against the war with Russia. Certain, however, that sooner or later my advice would be required, I thought it expedient to hasten the period. I was not ignorant that an address from Louis XVIII. to the French people, dated from Hartwell, 1st of February, was being clandestinely circulated, in which the senate was invited to become the *instrument of a great service.* I knew that the emperor was aware of this document, the authenticity of which, however, might be questioned, as it had not given rise in England to any public observation or discussion. I procured a copy of it, which I addressed to him, assuring him, at the same time, of its genuineness.

I represented to him, in my letter, that his triumphs had lulled the Faubourg St. Germain, but that his reverses had

again aroused it; that these reverses had produced a vast change in the opinion of Europe; that, even in France, the public mind had already undergone a change; that the partisans of the Bourbon family were on the alert; that they would secretly re-organize themselves the instant that the power of the head of the empire should lose its fascination; that weariness of war was the most general and the deepest feeling; that nothing short of the national honour was required to enforce the necessity of conquering peace by a new campaign, in which the whole population were to be in arms, in order to support negotiations so anxiously expected; that, for our safety and his own, he must either make peace, or convert the war into a national one; that too implicit a confidence on the alliance of Austria would inevitably be his destruction; that great sacrifices must be made to Austria, and that what could not be withheld from her should be returned with the utmost promptitude; that I did not consider M. Otto as a person adequate to the discussion of such complicated political interests, especially when opposed to M. de Metternich; and I pointed out M. de Narbonne as alone able to penetrate the real intentions of Austria, whose conduct was so very equivocal.

It was not till after the lapse of a fortnight or three weeks, that I had a proof that my letter (though unanswered) had produced its effect, by the mission of M. de Narbonne to Vienna; I neither wished for, nor expected more; the rest was to follow sooner or later. I could rely upon the influence and credit of M. de Narbonne, whose mission was of the highest importance.

However, it must not excite astonishment, if, at the moment when Prussia obtained the levy *en masse* of the people of Germany, in the rear of the armies of the northern confederacy; if, at the moment, when she held out to the German nation its deliverance as the object of the war, that Napoleon voluntarily rejected the first defence he could have,—that of a national war. He was well aware he could

only obtain a burst of patriotic enthusiasm, by regaining the public opinion—by making to us concessions, easy to another, but which would have cost him his heart's blood, as they would have inflicted a wound upon his pride, and have been a curb upon his power. I was, therefore, convinced that he would no more acquiesce in such a measure, than in ceding to Prussia the places upon the Vistula and the Oder, and, to Austria, the Tyrol and Illyria. Napoleon thought he could meet all difficulties by the formation of a new army of three hundred thousand men, and by organizing a regency, in case even of his death.

By conferring it upon Maria-Louisa, with the right of assisting at the different councils of state, his object was two-fold; to flatter Austria, and, at the same time, to prevent any plot in favour of a provisionary government. But, as the empress regent could not authorize, by her signature, the presentation of any *senatus consultum*, nor the promulgation of any law, the part she had to act was limited to her appearance at the council-board. Besides, she was herself under the tutorship of Cambacérès, who was himself directed by Savary. The ex-minister, Champagny, made also part of the regency, under the name of secretary; whose duty it was to enter into a new register, ridiculously called the *state-book*, the *definitive* intention of the absent emperor. In fact, after the regency was set in motion, the *soul* of the government did not the less travel post with Napoleon, who did not fail of issuing forth numerous decrees from all his movable headquarters.

The allies, after several battles, were preparing to cross the Elbe, when the emperor, after having displayed extraordinary activity, during three months, in his preparations, quitted Paris on the 15th of April, and proceeded to place himself at the head of his troops.

At first, he astonished Europe by the creation and sudden appearance, in the very heart of Germany, of a new army of two hundred thousand men, which enabled him to act

on the offensive. By gaining two battles successively, the one at Bautzen, in Saxony, the other at Wurtchen, beyond the Sprée, he recovered the reputation of his military talents. The first consequence of these victories was to bring back to us the King of Saxony, who again threw himself headlong into our alliance.

The Prusso-Russians, whom Napoleon had defeated,—that is to say, the troops of Frederick William and the Emperor Alexander, continued their retreat towards the Oder, and he permitted himself to be drawn on in pursuit. But in proportion as he advanced, he separated himself from his reinforcements, whilst the allies, on the contrary, fell back upon theirs.

Suddenly the news of an armistice was noised about Paris. Napoleon acceded to it, as he stood in need of reinforcements of every kind, and because he feared, under the cloak of mediation, the armed interference of Austria.

The question was now, to decide where the line of demarcation between the two armies should stop. The two points which they warmly disputed were Hamburg and Breslau. The Prussians insisted, with the greatest obstinacy, upon being left in possession of Silesia. Napoleon was apprehensive that the enemy's object, in the armistice, was rather to strengthen themselves for war than to use it as a preliminary to peace; he determined however to acquiesce, the general wish around him being for a suspension of arms. He, therefore, gave up Breslau, abandoned the line of the Oder, and consented to withdraw his army upon Leignitz. The armistice was concluded on the 4th of June at Plessevig; and Napoleon again fixed his headquarters at Dresden.

Such were the events which occupied the first two months of a campaign which was about to decide the fate of Europe. They had, both on his and on the other side of the Rhine, wound up public attention to the highest possible pitch of excitement and anxiety.

The armistice was as a respite ; the nations now flattered themselves with the hope of an approaching peace—the object universally desired. Was it not thus, besides, that Napoleon, after all his victories, had succeeded in pacifying Europe? But, to an observer, how much times were altered ! At that time, for want of information that could be depended upon, we had in Paris but very imperfect ideas upon events, the secret springs of which we were equally ignorant of.

I was expecting news from headquarters, by an indirect channel, when I received from the arch-chancellor an invitation to confer with him upon a subject of importance. He informed me that he was commanded by the emperor to make a communication to me. The emperor, who had determined upon again accepting my services, desired that, at the same time he wrote to the King of Naples, requesting him to repair to Dresden, I should avail myself of the intimacy I enjoyed with that prince to determine him not to defer acquiescing in the emperor's wish ; I was to represent to him that it became absolutely necessary that we should make in Saxony the greatest display possible of our forces, and of our resources, both military and political, in order to induce the enemy to conclude a peace which should be honourable for us. The arch-chancellor gave me the emperor's letter to read, to which he joined his own entreaties, adding that he had not the least doubt but I should be immediately called to fill a mission which would not be inferior either to my talents or rank. I replied that I was ready to fulfil the emperor's wishes ; that I would, that moment, write to the King of Naples, and would communicate the contents of my letter to him, in order that he might report them to his majesty.

Although, from preceding circumstances, I expected that I should soon be recalled into activity, I could not doubt as to what I should direct my views. I was mistrustful of Italy, which, in case of the resumption of hostilities,

would only be for me an honourable exile, dictated by suspicion. However, I wrote my letter to Murat, who was himself in no ordinary position.

Joachim Murat, a brave and noble-minded general, but a king without any firmness or decision in his resolves, had created for himself, at Naples, a species of popularity and military power; he was so much dazzled with this, as to wish to shake off the yoke of Napoleon, who only considered him as an obedient vassal. It was not without difficulty that he had obeyed Napoleon's orders, in forming part of the Russian expedition with his contingent, formed of twelve thousand Neapolitans and a part of his guard. It was to him that Napoleon, when he fled, confided the command of the wretched remains of his army. Joachim, foreseeing the changes which were about to take place in the political system of Europe, resolved to return to his kingdom, and endeavour to preserve himself from the consequences of such a disaster. He quitted the army of Posen, and ten days after (27th of January, 1813), the *Moniteur* announced his departure in these terms; "The King of Naples, being indisposed, has been obliged to retire from the command of the army, which he has resigned into the hands of the prince viceroy. The latter is more accustomed to the direction of large masses, and possesses the entire confidence of the emperor."

This official sally was the more galling to Murat, from the emperor having, during the two preceding years, made him feel that he was but a vassal of the grand empire. Murat, perceiving that he must expect the fate of his brother-in-law, Louis, if the emperor, surmounting his disasters, should recover his ascendency, sought the alliance of Austria, which was not as yet detached from Napoleon. His first communications with the court of Vienna were managed by Count Miër, the Austrian minister at Naples. Some negotiations also took place with Lord Bentinck, commander of the English forces in Sicily. Joachim and Lord Bentinck

had even a secret interview in the island of Ponza ; but Murat was watched by Bonaparte.

When it was known at Naples that the emperor, after gaining the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen, was assembling a numerous army in Saxony, Queen Caroline wrote to her brother, requesting he would be more considerate towards her husband, and used all her influence with the king to induce him to break off his rash connections with Austria and England. Napoleon wrote to Murat, who, at first, refused to proceed to Saxony. He then caused a very affectionate letter to be written to him, in which Berthier, in the name of the emperor, entreated him to repair to head-quarters, assuring him, that in all probability the campaign would not be opened ; that negotiations for peace were about to be commenced, and that his own interests imperatively demanded his presence. My letter was nearly in the same terms ; and I flattered him by adding that glory was to be won there, and that his honour required that he should join his brothers in arms. Murat no longer hesitated. Before even he could have received my despatch, a courier from Dresden brought me an order from the emperor, requiring my presence at headquarters. I immediately concluded, that being as much apprehensive of my presence at Paris, as of that of Murat at Naples, we might consider ourselves as two hostages whom he was anxious to have in his power. I made some hasty preparations, and set off for Dresden *viâ* Mayence.

The defence of Mayence, our principal key to the Rhine, was confided to Augereau, with whom I was anxious to have an interview, and who was also ordered to form a corps of observation on the Maine. I found him very incredulous as to the peace, finding much fault with Napoleon, and expressing much pity for the poor inhabitants of Mayence, who were in the utmost alarm at the idea of a siege and the ruin of the beautiful environs of their city. Finding that he was completely master of all that had occurred, I set him

a babbling. "Adieu, now," said he, "to our days of glory! Alas! how little do these two victories, with which Napoleon makes all Paris re-echo, resemble those of our famous campaigns in Italy, where Bonaparte was my pupil in a science which he only now abuses. How great is the difficulty now to make even a few marches in advance. At Lutzen, our centre had given away; several battalions even had disbanded themselves; in vain did our two wings, by extending themselves, threaten to surround the forces accumulated by the enemy at the centre; we should have been lost, but for sixteen battalions of the young guard and forty-eight pieces of cannon. I tell you," continued he, "we can only calculate upon the superiority of our artillery; we have taught them to beat us. After Bautzen, he forced the passage of the Elbe, and made himself an opening into the north; but he was obliged to stop before Wurtzen, on the other side of the Sprée, and there we only carried the position and the entrenched camp by immense loss of blood. I have letters from headquarters, and from these this horrible butchery has produced no advantages; no cannon taken, nor prisoners. In a hilly country like this, the enemy are everywhere found entrenched, and disputing the ground with invariable success. The battle of Reichenbach was disadvantageous to us. Observe also, that in this short opening of the campaign, a cannon-ball carried off Bessières, on this side the Elbe, while another killed Duroc at Reichenbach; Duroc, the only friend he had left! The same day, Bruyères and Kirgemer fell also under random bullets. What a war!" cried Augereau, continuing his disheartening reflections, "what a war is this! it will be the end of us all! What is he now about at Dresden? He will not make peace; he will get himself surrounded by five hundred thousand men; for rely upon it, Austria will be as little faithful to him as Prussia. Yes, if he persist, and be not killed, which he will not be, good-bye to us all."

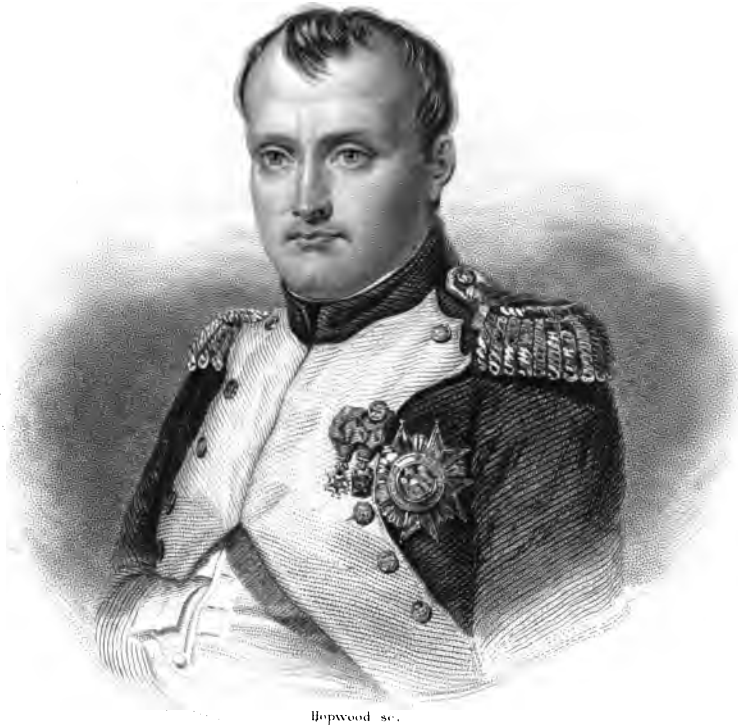
These observations sufficiently convinced me of the truth

of what I had already heard, that an impatience for peace and for returning to Paris, formed the anxious desire of almost every general whose fortune was made. Dresden presented to me, at the same time, the idea of a vast entrenched camp, and a capital city. The forests in the vicinity were being felled by the axes of the pioneers. Upon my arrival, I everywhere found the earth dug up, trees felled, ditches, and palisadoes being made. The emperor was continually on horseback, overlooking the works, and surveying the surrounding country, accompanied by Bertheir, Soult, and the geographical engineer Bacler d'Alby; he was almost continually, with the map in his hand, examining all the openings which led into the plain of Dresden. The construction of bridges, the tracing of roads, the erection of redoubts and the formation of camps, formed also the principal objects in his excursions and rides.

All these fortifications and lines might be considered as the advanced works of Dresden, the central point of a strong position on the higher bank of the Elbe; the works on the right bank round the city were nearly finished; peasants, put in requisition from all parts of Saxony, were labouring at their completion. The emperor had completely surrounded the city by ditches and palisadoes, supplying the intervals left by the walls; the approaches were also defended by a line of advanced redoubts, the cross-fires of which commanded the country to a considerable distance. Not confining himself to fortify the environs of Dresden, he had established along the whole line of the Elbe, upon the banks of that river, his cavalry; the advance of which was at Dresden, while its rear reached to Hamburg. The towns of Kœnigstein, Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Magdeburg, were his principal fortified points upon the Elbe, and secured to him the possession of that large and beautiful valley. All these works, begun and prosecuted with the utmost ardour, sufficiently revealed that Napoleon's plan was to concentrate a great part of his forces in the environs

of Dresden, there to await the course of events. Thus I found him much occupied with negotiations, after having chosen the environs of Dresden for his field of battle, and the line of the Elbe for his rallying point. The majority of his generals considered Dresden as possessing all the advantages of a central position proper to serve as a pivot for the emperor's intended operations. There were, however, some who owned to me that, if Austria declared itself, we should find ourselves in an awkward predicament, being exposed to an attack between the Elbe and the Rhine. They considered the division of the enemies' forces, though separate, as forming three grand masses. Towards the north, on the Berlin road, the army of Bernadotte, Prince of Sweden; towards the east, on the road to Silesia, the army of Blucher; and behind the mountains of Bohemia, the Austrian army of observation, under Schwartzenberg; for, at headquarters, the Austrians were already looked upon as on the point of declaring against us.

Being informed that the emperor had returned to the palace of Marcolini, in Friederichstadt, I hastened to present myself at his audience. He called me into his cabinet; I found him very serious. "You have come late, my Lord Duke," said he to me. "Sire, I have used the utmost diligence in obeying your majesty's commands." "Why were you not here before my grand discussion with Metternich? you would have fathomed him." "Sire, it was not my fault." "Those people wish to dictate laws to me without a sword being drawn; and do you know who most annoy me at this moment? Your two friends, Bernadotte and Metternich; the one makes an open, the other an underhand, war against me." "But, sire!" . . . . "Call upon Berthier; he will communicate to you everything respecting our present situation, and will you put *au fait* to all; you must then give me your ideas upon this infernal Austrian negotiation, which is slipping through my fingers; all your ability is required to preserve it. However, I will



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NAPOLÉON

no way compromise my power or my glory! Those scoundrels are so hard; they want, without fighting, the money and the provinces which I only obtained at the sword's point. I have arranged matters well, as to the chief point: Narbonne has undeceived us; you will see what his opinion is. Speak with Berthier as soon as possible, give the matter mature consideration, and let me see you in two days."

Upon withdrawing, I found it was impossible for me that day to converse with Berthier, who, having become, since Duroc's death, his confidant, both in politics and military affairs, was continually with the emperor, and was even a constant guest at his table. He put off the interview till the day following. In the meantime, a member of the cabinet made me acquainted with two circumstances which had just overshadowed our political horizon, and rendered the hopes of peace still more uncertain. I mean the political dispute of Count Metternich with the emperor (of which I shall soon speak), and the intelligence, which arrived that very day, of the complete defeat of our army in Spain, at Vittoria; a defeat which left the Peninsula at the mercy of Wellington, and brought the war to the foot of the Pyrenees. Such an event, known at Prague, could not fail producing a baleful influence upon the pending negotiations. The emperor, confounded at this new reverse, which he imputed to the inability of Joseph and Jourdan, looked around for a general, capable of repairing so many errors. This choice fell upon Marshal Soult, at that time near his person, in his guard. He enjoined him to go and rally his forces, and to defend, inch by inch, the passage of the Pyrenees. Soult would not have hesitated, had not his wife, recently arrived at Dresden, with a splendid equipage, shown some repugnance, and refused to return to Spain, "where," said she, "nothing is to be got but blows." As she possessed considerable influence over her husband, Soult, being much annoyed, had recourse to the emperor, who immediately sent for the

duchess. She made her appearance with an air of vast importance, and assuming an imperious tone, declared that her husband should not return to Spain ; that he had served there too long, and stood in need of repose. "Madame," cried Napoleon, enraged, "I did not send for you to hear this insolence ; I am not your husband ; and if I were, you would conduct yourself differently. Recollect that woman's province is to obey ; return to your husband, and let him be quiet." She was obliged to submit ; to sell horses, carriages, &c. &c., and in dudgeon, take the road to the western Pyrenees. This scene, with a haughty duchess, furnished much amusement at headquarters, and acted as a diversion to the malicious chit-chat, of which one of our most beautiful actresses, Mademoiselle de Bourgoin, had recently been the object. Having been sent for to Dresden, with the *élite* of the *Comédie Française*, and being invited one day to breakfast with the emperor, in company with Berthier and Caulaincourt, she had, it is said, after laying aside the character of Melpomene, successively assumed that of Hebe, Terpischore, and Thais.

But let us pass on to more serious circumstances. I, at length, obtained an interview with Berthier, who had a small apartment in the Brühl[1] palace. It would be tiresome to relate *verbatim*, our long conversation upon the military and political position of the emperor at this time. I shall only give here the portion really historical, introducing some ideas, drawn from my own recollections. We will commence by the Austrian negotiation. Narbonne, writing from Vienna towards the end of April, was the first to inform us that Austria could be but little depended upon, he having forced from M. de Metternich the avowal, that the treaty of alliance of the 14th of March, 1812, no longer appeared applicable to existing circumstances ; he called for

[1] We suppose it to be the same thing with the palace of Marcolini, which was occupied by Napoleon, and formerly belonged to the Count de Brühl, a minister of Augustus III., the Elector of Saxony, the King of Poland.—*Note by the French Editor.*

a serious attention to the demands and armaments of Austria. The emperor immediately conceived the idea of, at least, neutralizing the cabinet of Vienna, by means of two negotiations: the one official, the other secret; he flattered himself with destroying the influence of the northern coalition, and to do this he relied upon the emperor, his father-in-law, and M. de Metternich.

The emperor had formed an erroneous opinion of this statesman, who had resided for three years at Paris as ambassador, and who had negotiated, in quality of prime minister, the treaty of Vienna and of alliance. Of all European statesmen, he was indisputably the one who best understood the government and court of Napoleon. In this he had succeeded, through his high office, by successively paying his interested devoirs to Hortensia and Pauline, and principally from predilection, to Murat's wife, afterwards the Queen of Naples.

The emperor formed a superficial judgment of a diplomatist, who under the exterior of a man of the world, agreeable, gallant, and devoted to pleasure, masked one of the strongest thinkers of Germany, and concealed a mind essentially European and monarchical. Still deceiving himself, even after his reverses, the emperor imagined that intrigue at Vienna would be superior to considerations of state; such was the source of his errors. Imagining that he had cut the Gordian knot of policy, in the fields of Lutzen and Wurtzen, he thought he had fully succeeded in regaining Austria to his interests. M. de Bubna was despatched to him; this minister did not dissemble, in the midst of his flatteries, that his court would demand in Italy, the Illyrian provinces, on the side of Bavaria and Poland, an increase of frontiers; and lastly, in Germany, the dissolution of the confederation of the Rhine. Napoleon, considering it weakness to purchase a mere neutrality with such sacrifices, in answer to the autograph letter of his father-in-law, replied that he would die fighting, rather than submit to such conditions. The

uncertainty respecting the alliance being prolonged, after the armistice, Bubna was seen going to and fro between Vienna and Dresden, Dresden and Prague, and at length he announced that Russia and Prussia adhered to the mediation of his court. A congress at Prague now was proposed. Narbonne followed the court of Austria thither; and scarcely was he in the neighbourhood of Dresden, than he repaired thither to receive fresh instructions. "Well," said the emperor to him, "what do they say of Lutzen?" "Ah! sire," replied the witty courtier, "some say you are a god, others, that you are a devil; but every one allows you are more than a man." Narbonne, a deep observer of mankind, was not, however, mistaken respecting the supernatural power of him whose head he compared to a volcano.

The secret negotiation turned upon two conditions, the withdrawing from the Illyrian provinces, and the payment of a provisional subsidy of fifteen millions, as a small compensation for what Austria affirmed she had refused, viz., ten millions sterling, offered her by the Cabinet of London, in order to induce her to declare against us. She had already received ten millions in two equal payments.

After having conferred with Narbonne, Napoleon decided that the negotiations should be opened direct with M. de Metternich, and that I should repair to Dresden, as I had for a long time been in possession of the clue to the labyrinth of diplomacy.

Whilst a courier was despatched for me, M. de Metternich arrived, bringing with him the answer of his cabinet to the pressing notes of the minister of foreign affairs. The alliance considered as incompatible with the mediation was first to be broken off. The Austrian minister, also, no longer dissembled the intentions of his court to place itself between the belligerent powers, to prevent their communicating with each other, but through the chancery of Vienna. Here fresh difficulties arose, as Napoleon would not understand this unusual mode of negotiation. Prince Metternich, being

the bearer of a private letter from his master, came to deliver it to the emperor, who granted him a private audience. Here the altercation began. First, Napoleon complained that a month had already been lost, that the mediation of Austria had the character of hostility, and that she would no longer guarantee the integrity of the French empire; he complained that she had interfered to arrest his victorious progress, in speaking of armistice and mediation. "You talk of peace and alliance," said he to M. de Metternich, "and the political horizon becomes more and more clouded. The ties of the coalition are drawn still closer by the treaties cemented with English gold. Now that your two hundred thousand men are ready, you come to dictate laws to me; your cabinet is eager to take advantage of my embarrassment, to recover all or part of what it has lost, and to propose our ransom before we have fought. Well! I will consent to treat; but, let us have a candid explanation. What are your demands?" "Austria," replied Metternich, "is only desirous of establishing an order of things which, by a wise distribution of the European power, may place the guarantee of peace under the ægis of a confederacy of independent states." "Be more explicit, I have offered you Illyria; I have consented to a subsidy to induce you to remain neuter; my army is quite sufficient to make the Russians and Prussians listen to reason." M. de Metternich then made the avowal, that things were at such a pass, that Austria could not remain neuter; that she was forced to declare for or against France. Thus pressed, Napoleon, without flinching, seized a map of Europe, and desired Metternich to explain himself. Finding that Austria insisted, not only upon Illyria, but the half of Italy, the return of the pope to Rome, the re-establishment of Prussia, the ceding of Warsaw, of Spain, Holland, and the confederation of the Rhine; he could no longer contain himself. "Your object then," cried he, "in going from camp to camp, is a division; you want the dismemberment of the

French empire! With a single dash of the pen, you pretend to throw down the ramparts of the fortresses of Europe, the keys of which I could only obtain by dint of victory! And it is without striking a blow, that Austria thinks to make me subscribe to such conditions! And it is my father-in-law who makes an offer, in itself an insult! He deceives himself, if he thinks that a mutilated throne can be an asylum for his daughter or his grand-son. Ah! Metternich, how much has England paid you, to induce you to act this part against me?"

At these words, the statesman, offended, replied only by a proud silence. Napoleon, confused, became more calm, and declared that he did not yet despair of peace; he insisted that the congress might be opened. Upon dismissing M. de Metternich, he told him that the cession of Illyria was not his *ne plus ultra*. The Austrian minister did not quit Dresden (30th of June) till after he had caused the mediation of his court to be accepted, and prolonged the armistice till the 10th of August. When Napoleon was asked, if the five last millions of the subsidy must be paid: "No," said he, "these people would soon demand all France of us." Such was the state of affairs on my arrival at Dresden.

I did not conceal from Berthier, whose judgment was sound, and opinions just, that I had not the least doubt but that Austria would join the coalition, unless the emperor abandoned, at least, Germany and Illyria. I added, that if hostilities were resumed, I foresaw the greatest disasters; as there had never existed, since the revolution, so firm a principle of coalition against our power.

Berthier coincided with me in opinion. "But," said he, "you cannot imagine how much circumspection is necessary with the emperor; an open contradiction would irritate him beyond my power to pacify him. I am obliged to use the most indirect means, unless he demands my opinion. For example, since Austria has appeared desirous of dictating

to us, we are often discussing plans of campaign upon the supposition of a rupture; that is my ground. Well, would you believe it? I did not dare to urge him to abandon the line of the Elbe for the purpose of approaching methodically that of the Rhine, which would cover the whole of all the forces we can dispose of. How did I act? In an indirect manner, I seconded the plan of a very intelligent officer,[1] a plan which consisted by calling in all the troops we had on the other side of the Elbe, in reuniting all the detached corps, and in retiring *en masse* upon the Saale, and from thence upon the Rhine. One very serious consideration pleaded in favour of this plan. Allowing that Austria declared herself, she would immediately open the gates of Bohemia, permit the allies to turn our position, and, in a word, cut us off from France. Nothing could make an impression upon the emperor. 'Good God!' cried he, 'why ten defeats could scarcely reduce me to the position in which you place me all at once. You are apprehensive of my situation in the heart of Germany being a very precarious one. Was I not in a much more hazardous situation at Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram? Well! I conquered at Wagram, Austerlitz, and Marengo. What! do you think me in a precarious situation, who am protected by all the fortresses of the Elbe, and by Erfurt? Dresden is the pivot upon which I shall manœuvre to make head against every attack. From Berlin to Prague the enemy develop themselves upon a circumference of which I occupy the centre. Do you imagine that so many different nations will long keep up a connected system of operations for such an extent of line? I shall sooner or later surprise them in false movements. The fate of Germany must be decided in the plains of Saxony. I repeat it: the position I have chosen gives me such chances, that the enemy, if they even

[1] We have reason to believe that the person here alluded to is Lieutenant-General Rogniat, commander of the engineer department in the campaign of Saxony.—*Editor's Note.*

gained ten battles, could scarcely drive me back upon the Rhine—while I, if once victorious, would take possession of the hostile capitals, disengage my garrisons upon the Oder and the Vistula, and force the allies to make a peace which would leave my glory untouched. At any rate, I have calculated upon everything ; fate must do the rest. As to your plan of retrograde defence, it cannot suit me: besides, I do not ask you to furnish plans of campaign ; do not make them ; be satisfied with entering into my ideas, in order to execute the commands I may give you.'" "But," said I to Berthier, "if every general and staff-officer of the army thought as you do, which I have no doubt is really the case, do you not conceive that this combination of a moral opposition would force the emperor not to compromise everything by his obstinancy?" "Do not deceive yourself," replied Berthier ; "opinions are much divided at headquarters. Because we have been a long time victorious, they imagine we shall be so still, and do not perceive how much times are altered. Besides, see how the emperor is surrounded : Maret is completely drawn into his system ; nothing, therefore, can be expected from him. If Caulaincourt, who enjoys his confidence in a still greater degree, sometimes speaks his mind, and forces the truth upon him, he is not less obsequious. The emperor never consults his two bravest generals, Murat and Ney, except on the field of battle—and he is in the right. Those usually about his person encourage to war ; all but Narbonne, Flahault, Drouet, Durosnel, and Colonel Bernard, who are distinguished exceptions, and whose opinions might easily be formed into a reasonable system. As to his other favourites, especially Bacler d'Abby, who, with his maps, is constantly at his side, they, like their master, indulge the hope that the allies will commit faults which may be turned to their destruction ; they, speak of them with contempt, as acting without any plan ; they will not see that all has undergone a change since our unfortunate Russian campaign—that we

have taught them how to beat us—and that, if they cannot attain the velocity and the precision of our manœuvres, and the superiority of our artillery, other advantages, especially that of numbers, will ensure their eventual triumph ; for, as in the days of Marshal Saxe, it is still *les gros bataillons* who gain the victory." "Do not forget," I answered, "the co-operation of the people, who are now stirred up in insurrection against us, not only by secret societies, but even by their governments." "No doubt," rejoined Berthier : "add to which we are also in want of spies and a good cavalry." "Enough," said I, taking leave of him ; "I will commit to writing your ideas, to which I will add my own ; and thus provided, I will see the emperor, and tell him the truth, as I have done upon every occasion."

My intention was not to enter into a military discussion, nor even into a profound political disquisition : for I was perfectly aware that either the abruptness of his dialogue, of his questions, or of his dogmatizing tone, would not allow me the time. I had been able to judge, at my first audience, that two men were uppermost in his thoughts, Bernadotte and Metternich. As to the latter I knew well what to think ; the former was a more difficult subject to speak of : it was, however, necessary. I had been assured that, at the Abo interview (September, 1812), the Emperor of Russia said to him, "If Bonaparte be unsuccessful in his invasion of my empire, and if, in consequence of that, the throne of France should become vacant, I know no one better qualified to ascend it than yourself." Were not these words, which were a sufficient explanation of Bernadotte's conduct, rather employed as a stimulus, than as an index of the real sentiments of the august personage who uttered them ?—The interior of France was, at this time, no way prepared for such an event : how many chances were wanting to render it even probable ? After the disasters of Moscow, the European cabinets could no longer think of replacing the military chief of France by another soldier of

fortune. They began to recollect that there was a dynasty of Bourbons. Many doubts were removed by the expected arrival of Moreau on the continent, in the suite of Bernadotte. The first operations of Charles John, who, previous to the armistice, had landed at Stralsund with the Swedish corps, was to retake Pomerania from us. What could his politics be? He was reported to be always accompanied and almost watched by the English General Stewart, the Austrian Baron de Vincent, the Russian General Pozzo-di-Borgo, and the Prussian General Krusemarck. Amid such mistrust, some glimmerings of hope shone around him; for almost all parties had their representatives at his head-quarters, even the faction of the malcontents, of which Madame de Staël was the life and soul.

Napoleon had just learnt, that, availing himself of the armistice, Charles John had recently visited the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, at their headquarters of Reichenbach, in order to confirm them in their resolution not to sign peace so long as a single French soldier should be left on the right bank of the Rhine. The temper in which I was about to find him may easily be conjectured. I prepared myself for the interview, and presented myself at the gardens of Palace Marcolini. Being almost immediately introduced, I found the emperor surrounded with maps and plans. He had scarcely perceived me, when, rising, he addressed me thus: "Well, my Lord Duke, are you now acquainted with our situation?"—"Yes, Sire."—"Shall we be between two fires; between the howitzers of your dear Bernadotte and the bombs of my most excellent friend Schwartzenberg!"—"In my opinion, there cannot be the least doubt; unless you satisfy Austria."—"I will not do so; I will not tamely submit to be stripped without fighting. I know full well that the ambition of all, and the bad passions of many, have been set in action against me. Your Bernadotte, for example, may do us much harm, by giving up the key to our policy and the tactics of our army to the enemy."

—"But, Sire, has not your cabinet endeavoured to induce him back into a less hostile system?"—"By what means? he is bought over by England; I have, however, written to him, and have about him a man I can depend upon; but his head has been turned with seeing himself courted and flattered by the legitimates."—"Sire, all this has appeared to me in so serious a light, that I also have taken up the pen to endeavour to open the Prince of Sweden's eyes, who is at perfect liberty to come and show off in Germany; but who ought not, in any case whatever, to make war upon France."—"Pshaw! France! France! I am France!"—"Will your majesty condescend to inform me if you approve of my letter; I prove in it to the Prince of Sweden that he is making himself the instrument of Russia and England to overthrow your power, and for the resuscitation of the cause of the Bourbons." (I then delivered my letter to the emperor, who read it attentively.) "Very well; but how shall you get it conveyed to him?"—"I think your majesty might avail yourself of the medium of Marshal Ney, so long the friend and companion in arms of the Prince of Sweden, and who might add his own personal solicitations, your majesty authorizing him to choose for his emissary Colonel T****."—"No, that officer was formerly a jacobin."—"Sire, Lieutenant L****, of the *gendarmerie*, might be employed; his devotion and intelligence is well known to your majesty."—"Well, let it be so; instructions shall be given him, and he shall wait upon Ney." After two minutes' silence, the emperor suddenly resumed: "Have you considered the means of prosecuting the secret negotiation with Austria?" "Yes, Sire."—"Have you drawn up a note for me?"—"Yes, Sire, here it is." (The emperor, after having read it) "What! does all appear to you unavailing? Do you see in my plans nothing but palliatives and half measures; do you agree with the opinions of those, who would wish to see me disarmed, and reduced to an equality with a village mayor? Rely upon it, my Lord Duke, you will never find

a more secure ægis than mine."—"Sire, of this I am so well persuaded, that it is precisely one of the motives which make me so ardently desire to see your majesty's throne no longer exposed to the chances of war. But it is my duty not to conceal from your majesty that the reaction of Europe, for a long time arrested by your glorious victories, can no longer be so except by other triumphs more difficult to obtain. The same ministers, who were always ready to negotiate with your cabinet, and whom it was formerly so easy for you to divide and intimidate, now boast that their voices shall no longer be stifled in the councils of kings by a narrow and short-sighted policy; they pretend that they have at stake the salvation of Europe?"—"Well; I have at stake the salvation of the empire, and certainly I shall not undertake a part which they have rejected."—"But a solution is necessary; if you do not disarm Austria, or if she do not embrace your cause, you will have all Europe against you, now firmly united. The best thing to be done would be peace; it is practicable by abandoning Germany to preserve Italy, or by ceding Italy in order to keep a footing in Germany. I am beset, Sire, with melancholy presentiments; in the name of Heaven, for the glory and consolidation of that magnificent empire I have assisted you in organizing, avoid, I entreat, a rupture, and avert, while it is yet time, a general crusade against your power. Think, that this time, upon the least reverse of fortune, the face of everything will be changed, and that you will lose the rest of your allies, who are even now wavering; that by rejecting a national defence, the only safeguard against disaster, your enemies will turn to their advantage the *vis inertiæ*, so fatal to the power which isolates itself; it is then that old dormant hopes will be revived, and that England, ever on the watch, will pour into Bordeaux, La Vendée, Normandy, and Morbihan, its agents, commissioned on the first favourable opportunity to revive the cause of the Bourbons. I conjure you, Sire, for the sake of our safety, and your own

glory, not to stake your crown and power on the chances of a throw. What will be the event? That five hundred thousand soldiers, backed by a second line, consisting of a whole population in arms, will compel you to abandon Germany, without giving you time to renew the negotiations." At these words the emperor, raising his head, and assuming a warlike attitude, "I can yet," said he, "fight ten battles with them, and one is sufficient to disorganize and crush them. It is a pity, my Lord Duke, that a fatal tendency to discouragement and despair should have thus pervaded the best inclined minds; the question is no longer the ceding this or that province; our political supremacy is at stake; and upon that depends our existence. If my physical power be great, my moral power is infinitely more so; it is magic; do not let us break the enchantment. What occasion for all this alarm? Let events develop themselves. As to Austria, she should deceive no one; she wishes to profit by my situation in order to wrest great concessions from me; I have almost made up my mind to it; but I can never be persuaded that she consents to ruin me utterly, and thus place herself at the mercy of Russia. This is my line of policy, and I expect you will serve me to the utmost of your ability. I have appointed you governor-general of Illyria; and, to all appearance, you will have to cede it to Austria. Go, make your way through Prague, there make your dispositions for the secret negotiations; and from thence proceed to Gratz and Laybach, after which you will act according to circumstances; use all despatch, for poor Junot, whom you replace, is certainly stark mad; and Illyria has need of an able and firm hand." "I am quite ready, Sire, to answer the confidence with which you honour me; but, if I dared, I would beg you to observe, that one of the principal springs in the secret negotiation would doubtless be, independently of the withdrawing from the provinces, the perspective of the regency, such as it has been organized by your majesty in its greatest latitude."

"I understand you well: say all you please upon the subject; I give you *carte blanche*."

My sole object was now, supposing that a rupture should take place, to turn my new situation to the advantage of the state. Besides, the secret negotiation with Austria appeared to be without an object, the moment that the emperor refused to make to that power the concessions by which alone he could retain it in his interests. My mission was therefore, with respect to Austria, nothing but a blind; and towards myself, nought else but a pretext to remove me, during the crisis, from the centre of affairs. The emperor had also two other objects. First, to keep, as long as possible, the court of Austria in suspense; and to keep up a party there ready to second him, if, in case of a rupture, he should succeed, by some grand defeat, in disuniting the northern coalition. Secondly, he earnestly wished to make me traverse the Austrian monarchy from one end to the other, on my way to my government, being persuaded that I should not make my observations upon it in vain. Berthier owned to me that such was the emperor's intention; that he even desired I would stop at Prague as long as possible, in order to concert matters with Narbonne, and to penetrate the ulterior views of Austria. He did not fail to expatiate much upon the high powers with which I was invested in the Illyrian provinces, powers which, being at the same time both civil and military, conferred upon me a kind of dictatorship; but I knew perfectly well what I had to expect from this Illyria, whether war broke out again, or whether this province were ceded to Austria. As to my stay and my observations at Prague, I was convinced that it became me less than any other person to prolong the one, or extend the others beyond the limits of propriety.

I was, however, desirous of adopting some plan, founded equally upon reason and utility; for I know nothing worse than to act at random. Having no command on the existing political state of affairs, I arranged my ideas upon the pro-

babilities of the future. "The emperor," said I, "must succumb under a general confederacy; he may perish in the field, or may be attainted by a decree of forfeiture, after a series of fresh reverses, which would entirely dissipate the fascination of his power. Spite of the egotism, the blindness, and even the baseness which predominate among the chief functionaries of the state, it is certain that ideas as to the general preservation must take root among some of the strongest thinkers of Paris; this may bring about one of those revolutions, determined by the weight of circumstances and the exigences of public opinion. Such a revolution may have important consequences, for if England, the soul of this new coalition, should assume the political direction of it, the chances would be found to be on the side of the Bourbons." I have no need to say that my former proceedings did not permit me to turn my thoughts to that quarter, even supposing the overthrow of the empire; and perhaps I shall be considered as being too candid in confessing that, during the last six months of 1813, the Bourbons would have found, among the high officers of state, but few leading men upon whom they could reasonably depend. In fact, all the revolutionary interests, which were detaching themselves from the emperor, those even of the royalists, who had become incorporated with the imperial government, must first necessarily endeavour to rally under the power of the regency, of which Napoleon himself had laid the basis, if a few men of ability were enabled to prepare this transition in case of a reverse. But it was in that case that it would have been imprudent to wait till all was lost. Austria was much interested in seeing a regency established under the ægis of an arch-duchess, and in maintaining a system which, by allying her to France, reconciled to Europe, and reduced within its natural limits, the Alps and the Rhine, would enable her immediately to counterbalance the too great preponderance about to be acquired by Russia. It was upon this basis that I arranged my ideas, and explained

them in a memoir, in which I established the hypothesis of an effective regency, the eventual existence of which might be pointed out to statesmen. According to my plan, all interests were to be represented in the council of regency. I naturally was to be a member of it, as well as Messrs. Talleyrand, Narbonne, Macdonald, Montmorency, and two other persons, whose names I shall not mention. As to the ambition of the marshals, it would have been gratified by the erection of large military governments, which were to be shared among them, and which would have increased their influence in the state; in a word, according to my ideas, the regency would have conciliated all interests and opinions. The government, instead of being the oppressor, would have become the protector, of its subjects,—while its form would have been that of a tempered monarchy, with a mixture of a moderate aristocracy (*aristocratie raisonnable*), and of a representative democracy. This was undoubtedly the plan best suited to the serious character of circumstances, as it would preserve France from the twofold danger of invasion and dismemberment. I had the greatest reason for believing that it would be favourably received by the statesman at that time at the head of the Austrian policy, whose solidity of character and depth of views were well known to me; I mean M. de Metternich. His kindness for me took its rise from the declaration of war against Austria, in 1809. At that time I received orders from the emperor to have him seized (contrary to the usual forms dictated by propriety in diplomatic affairs) by a brigade of *gendarmerie*, to be conducted under this escort to the confines of Austria, subjecting him at the same time to every severity which could increase the insult offered to him. Much hurt at such unheard-of treatment, I took upon me to soften down the execution of it. I immediately ordered my carriage, and repaired to the ambassador's; I explained to him the object of my visit, and expressed the deep regret it caused me. A mutual explanation followed, sufficient, at least, for us to

understand each other. Having requested Marshal Moncey to appoint a captain of *gendarmerie*, whose amiable and polite manners might qualify, in some degree, the insulting nature of his commission, I ordered him to take his seat in the travelling-carriage of the ambassador, to whom I allowed the requisite time for preparation. Upon taking leave, he expressed to me his deep sense of obligation for the attentions and delicacy I had observed upon this occasion.

My ideas, therefore, being thus settled, and being urged by the emperor and Berthier, I began my journey, attended by M. de Chassenon, an auditor attached to the commissariat-general of the grand army, and took the road to Prague,—not, however, without having, previous to my departure from Dresden, paid my respects to the venerable monarch of Saxony, who had devoted himself with so much perseverance to the French cause. I had an opportunity of remarking how much the Saxons regretted seeing their king identified with the interests of Napoleon, and how clearly they foresaw the misfortunes which might accrue from it.

I arrived at Prague at the moment of the expected opening of the congress, upon which, however, I founded not the slightest hopes, as, in my eyes, it was nothing more than one of those diplomatic scenes played off to justify the employment of force. M. de Metternich and the plenipotentiaries of Russia and Prussia had just arrived, and the whole Austrian chancery had already taken up its quarters. Of the two French plenipotentiaries, I only found Narbonne; he was expecting Caulaincourt, and was ordered not to act without his colleagues. Some difficulties had already preceded the meeting of the congress; Napoleon had just protested against the nomination of M. d'Anstett, the Russian plenipotentiary, a Frenchman by birth, born in Alsace, and whom he designated in his *Moniteur* as a most active agent of war. Besides these altercations, it was expected that questions relating to form and ceremony would

arrest the progress of affairs at their very outset. Napoleon had entered into the same explanation with Narbonne as with me. "The peace that I will not make," he had said to him, "is that which my enemies wish to impose upon me. Be assured, he who has always dictated peace cannot, in his turn, tamely submit to it. If I abandon Germany, Austria will fight with still more ardour till she obtain Italy; if I cede Italy, she will, in order to secure her possession of it, hasten to expel me from Germany." The only positive instruction Narbonne had yet received, was to endeavour not to place Austria in a hostile position. I communicated to him the emperor's intention relative to a secret negotiation, and he augured as unfavourably from it as I did myself.

I found myself at Prague in a sphere entirely new to me, and on a ground with which I was equally unacquainted. It was known that I had arrived there merely on my way forward. Much delicacy was required in getting an interview with the head of the Austrian chancery. I everywhere found the same mistrust with respect to Napoleon, and complaints, more or less well founded. I was assured, for example, that, since the month of December, 1812, he had offered to abandon to Austria, Italy, the Illyrian provinces, the supremacy of Germany, and, in short, to re-establish the ancient splendour of the court of Vienna; but that he no sooner saw himself enabled to open a new campaign, than he had evaded all his promises, confining himself to cede nothing but a few trifling advantages, which could bear no proportion whatever to what Austria naturally expected, in order to resume her rank and preponderance in Europe.

The cabinet of Vienna evidently wished to profit by the diminution of our power, to recover what it had lost by the peace of Presburg and that of Schœnbrunn. It attached but little value to the regaining of Illyria, which could not fail, on the first shot, returning under its vast dominion.

I learnt at Prague that the northern coalition had just declared against the confederation of the Rhine, at the open-

ing even of the campaign ; and that, on the 25th of March, Marshal Kutusoff had announced, by a proclamation published at Kalisch, that the confederation of the Rhine was dissolved. This was a species of sanction offered beforehand to the defection of the German troops employed in our armies. I likewise learnt, that the conference of Reichenbach had been just resumed at Trachenberg ; that the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and the Prince Royal of Sweden, were present at them, as well as M. de Stadion on the part of Austria, and the Earl of Aberdeen for England, as well as the generals-in-chief of the combined army. There the forces which the coalesced powers were about to devote to the most determined war ever undertaken against Napoleon were decided upon ; there their movements of attack and their offensive operations were planned ; in short, the rendezvous of the three grand armies was appointed to be *in the very camp* of the enemy. It was impossible not to perceive an understanding between all the contracting parties, about to be cemented by treaties of partition and subsidy.

It was, however, decided to open the congress, but to enclose Napoleon in it, in the circle of Popilius. Although not openly admitted to the conferences, England was undoubtedly the soul of them ; it was she who was about to direct the negotiations. Thus there was no longer any doubt but that Austria was on the eve of joining the northern confederation, and strengthening it by two hundred thousand troops of the line. To all that we could confidentially urge, in order to dissuade her, she replied, that it was scarcely possible to find in Napoleon any guarantee that she should not be exposed to fresh spoliations, while the present state of affairs promised her more.

All my efforts to renew the secret negotiation were unavailing. As to my private views, as their object was the future guarantee of our political establishment, I was informed that the plan of a regency, in the interests of

Austria, might influence the determinations of its policy, but not till suppositions should be converted into realities. I could not succeed in getting any provisionary engagement entered into, on the basis of contingent events ; I merely obtained the assurance that they would only commence with the destruction of the power of Napoleon abroad, and that Austria would refuse to be a party to any plan for the subversion of our home affairs. I ought not to forget to mention that, among the complaints made to me by the Austrian chancery, I remarked its reproaches against Napoleon on account of the diatribes of his *Moniteur*, as well as of certain articles inserted in other journals.

I quitted Prague certainly with more information, but without having found there the least shadow of a guarantee for the future ; on the contrary, I carried with me the melancholy conviction that a million of soldiers were about to decide the fate of Europe ; and that, in this vast conflict, it would be difficult to stipulate in time for the interests which I had combined, and which no diplomacy would as yet make an object of primary importance.

In traversing the Austrian monarchy, in my way to Illyria, my journey, although a very rapid one, afforded me much instruction. I first was convinced that this compact monarchy, although composed of so many different states, was better governed and administered than is generally supposed ; that it was also inhabited and defended by a loyal and patient people ; that there was, in its policy, a kind of longanimity, well calculated to triumph over reverses, for which it had always palliatives in reserve. By its perseverance in its maxims of state, it triumphed, sooner or later, over the shifting policy of circumstance and contingency ; in short, it was evident that Austria, by the entire development of its power, was about to throw a decisive weight into the balance of Europe.

I proceeded, by the way of Gratz, the capital of Stiria, and by the Stirian Alps towards Laybach, the ancient

capital of the duchy of Carniola, at that time considered the chief place of our Illyrian provinces. I arrived there towards the end of July, and immediately installed myself in quality of governor-general. These provinces, ceded by the treaty of peace of Schœnbrunn, in 1809, were composed of Austrian Frioul, of the government of the town and port of Trieste, of Carniola, which includes the rich mine of Idria, of the circle of Willach, and of a part of Croatia and Dalmatia,—that is to say, all the country situated to the right of the Save, reckoning from the point where that river quits Carniola, and takes its course as far as the frontier of Bosnia. This last country includes Provincial Croatia, the six districts of Military Croatia, Fiume, and the Hungarian shore, Austrian Istria, and all the districts upon the right bank of the Save, to which the Thalweg served as a boundary between the kingdom of Italy and the Austrian territory. From this description, it will be perceived that they were an assemblage of heterogeneous parts, each repelling the other; but which, had they been longer united to the French empire, might have formed one whole, and acquired, from their position, considerable importance,—the more so as Dalmatia and a part of Albania were comprised in them. The sensation caused by my arrival in these provinces was the greater because my name, as former minister of the general police, was known there, and I replaced in the civil and military government an aide-de-camp of the emperor, one of his favourites, Junot, Duke of Abrantes, who had just given an evident proof of madness. The circumstances relative to poor Junot are these: the corrosive effect of the severe climate of Russia upon the wound which had disfigured him in Portugal, domestic cares, and resentment at not having obtained a marshal's staff, had so affected his senses, that six weeks before my arrival, the aberration of his mind had been evinced in public. One day, making his aide-de-camp get into his barouche, to which six horses were harnessed, and which was preceded by a picquet of cavalry, he himself,

covered with his decorations, and having a whip in his hand, mounted the coach-box. Thus exposed, he rode for several hours, from one end of the town of Goritz to the other, in the midst of the crowd of astonished inhabitants. The next day he dictated the most absurd orders and letters, which he ended with this formula: "I, therefore, sir, pray that *Saint Cunegunda* will take you into her gracious favour and protection." Actions still more deplorable followed this; and the unfortunate Junot was sent back to France, where he died a fortnight after in consequence of a paroxysm, in which he threw himself out of a window, at his father's seat. Such was the man whom I had come to replace in the government of provinces, which, as least harmonizing with what was called the French empire, were still governed upon the principles of conquest. It is true, I was to be seconded by Lieutenant-General Baron Fresia, appointed commander-in-chief, under my immediate orders. This general officer, one among the Piedmontese who had most distinguished himself in the French armies, possessed much penetration and ability, and commanded a division of cavalry in the grand army at Dresden, when the emperor sent him into the Illyrian provinces.

We were here under a pure and mild climate; the country around us offered the greatest variety, and, though sometimes wild, was always picturesque; while among its inhabitants might at times be perceived the traces of advanced civilization, at others the manners of the primeval ages.

Upon quitting Dresden, when taking leave of the emperor, he told me that, in his hands, Illyria was an advanced guard upon Austria, calculated to be a check upon her; a sentinel at the gates of Vienna, to force obedience; that, notwithstanding, it had never been his intention to retain it; that he had only taken it as a pledge, it having been at first his intention to exchange it for Gallicia, and now, of offering it to his father-in-law to retain his alliance. I, however, had perceived from his vacillation, that he formed various projects

upon this said Illyria. He told me besides, that, at all events, he intended sending to the prince viceroy, Eugene Beauharnais, orders to be in readiness upon the Italian frontier, to make a vital attack upon the hereditary states, should the court of Vienna declare against us; he added that, at the same time, he would give directions to the Bavarian army, to Augereau's corps of observation, and the corps and cavalry under General Milhaud, to second the enterprise of the viceroy, whom he had ordered to penetrate even as far as Vienna. But could Napoleon deceive himself on these his gigantic views, and might he not propose them merely with the view of intimidating Austria?

I had scarcely arrived at my government, when I was convinced that the season for bold projects was passed, and that all idea of forming powerful diversions in the very heart of the hereditary states must be abandoned. In Illyria we had nothing but feeble attachments, and since the disasters of the campaign of Moscow, the military power of Italy was almost annihilated. Three corps of observation had been successively drawn from it since 1812, which had completely exhausted all the French and Italian battalions; the garrisons were completely drained of troops, and the reports preserved nothing but the numbers of the regiments; the viceroy, however, had just received a positive order to raise a new army with the utmost expedition. For this purpose, the conscriptions of the departments bordering upon the kingdom of Italy were allotted to him. The recruiting was rapid, but the skeleton regiments were with difficulty being completed; and this army, which was to consist of fifty thousand men, was still unorganized and without *materiel*, when Narbonne informed me, by a letter from Prague, of the rupture of the congress. It was there that the intentions of Austria had at length been declared on the 7th of August; she had demanded the dissolution of the duchy of Warsaw, and its being divided between herself, Russia, and Prussia; the re-establishment of the Hanseatic towns in their independence; the

re-integration of Prussia with a frontier on the Elbe; and the cession, to Austria, of all the Illyrian provinces, including Trieste. The question of the independence of Holland and Spain was referred to a general peace. Napoleon employed the whole of the 9th in deliberating. He at length decided upon giving a first answer, in which, accepting one part of the conditions, he rejected the others. The 11th was passed in awaiting the effect; but he soon learnt that, in the morning, the congress was broken up. That same day Austria abandoned our alliance for that of our enemies, and the Russian troops penetrated into Bohemia. Napoleon accepted too late, in their full extent, the conditions prescribed by M. de Metternich; but these concessions, which would have ensured a peace on the 10th, were of no avail on the 12th. Austria declared war, and adjourned, *sine die*, the question of the re-assembly of the congress. Upon receiving this letter, I had not the least doubt but that the attack would commence by Illyria.

When traversing the hereditary estates, the continual movement of the Austrian troops did not escape my notice. I learnt that field-marshal lieutenant Hiller was expected at Agram; that he had been preceded there by generals Frimont, Fenner, and Morshal; that the strength of the army, of which he was about to take the command, would amount to forty thousand men, and that the troops in Austrian Croatia had been already placed upon a war footing. Upon my arrival, I had immediately despatched intelligence of this to the prince viceroy. Every report I received announced that among the inhabitants of French Croatia, there were secret practices and silent machinations being carried on by Austrian agents, sent for that purpose on the other side of the Save; they were organizing an insurrectional movement which might assist the invasion. In fact, on the 17th of August, the day after the expiration of the German armistice, two Austrian columns, without any previous declaration of war, crossed the Save at Sissek and at Agram,

directing their march upon Carlstadt and Fiume. General Jeanin, in command at Carlstadt, the chief town of French Croatia, made at first some show of defence, but, abandoned by the Croatian soldiers under his orders, and attacked by the insurgent inhabitants, he effected his retreat almost alone to Fiume. Less fortunate, the governor of Croatia, M. de Contades, being arrested during his flight, was in danger of losing his life. Having almost by a miracle escaped the fury of the inhabitants, who were infuriated against all persons employed in the French administration, he was detained a prisoner by General Nugent, who would not consent to restore him his liberty, without being authorized so to do by the court of Vienna.

The behaviour of the Croatians upon this occasion gave me no surprise. I was aware of their attachment to the Austrian government. Almost all the other parts of the Illyrian provinces followed the example of Croatia. The towns even of Zara, Ragusa, and Cattaro, defended by Generals Roise, Montrichard, and Gauthier, with weak garrisons of Italians, and a few French officers, were soon besieged by the Austrian troops, seconded by bands of Dalmatians. Upon the first intelligence of these movements, I had caused the fortresses of Laybach and Trieste to be put into a state of defence. Having gained intelligence that the Austrian general, Hiller, commander-in-chief of the enemies' forces, was uniting at Clagenfurt the greatest part of his corps, with the view of forcing Willach and Tarvis, and of afterwards penetrating into the Tyrol, by the valley of La Drave; I immediately sent information of it to the prince viceroy. He had already set his army in march upon Illyria. The arrival of the Italian division of General Pino at Laybach, enabled me to make head against hostilities.

I, however, did not deceive myself: Hiller was manœuvring with forty thousand men; besides which, all the population was in his favour. The viceroy reduced, either by the numerical weakness of his army, or the inexperience

of his troops, to a defensive war, with the mere hope of gaining time, could not think of reoccupying the line of the Save, which the enemy had already left behind. As the greatest part of the Austrian force was in march upon Clagenfurt, it was really to be feared that the enemy might succeed in forcing the positions of Travis and Willach. This movement would have exposed the left of the viceroy's army, and opened to the Austrians an access into the Tyrol, through the valley of La Drave. The prince took up the position of Adelberg, his left being at the sources of the Save, and his right inclined towards Trieste. Upon his extreme left, he had ordered the passes of the Tyrol to be guarded by a detached corps.

The enemy, however, continued to be on the offensive. Fiume and Trieste, which they had taken without much effort, were retaken by General Pino with like facility. Willach, which was successively lost and recovered, suffered more from the battle than the combatants themselves. The only operation of vigour was the carrying the camp of Felnitz, by Lieutenant-General Grenier.

Thus passed all the month of September. As the emperor had observed, the fate of Italy was to be decided in Germany. At Dresden the rupture had been followed by military events of far greater importance.

But the battle of Dresden, while it diffused joy among the emperor's adherents, proved but a transient gleam of hope for them ; they found themselves again plunged in doubt and alarm. The intelligence of the reverses at Katsbach, Gross-Beeren, and Culm, began to transpire at Paris and Milan. I learnt from my correspondents that eighteen days had elapsed without the arrival of any couriers at Paris. Rumours began to spread a gloom over France ; the emperor was losing the confidence of his people. I was informed that royalist intrigues were again afloat in La Vendée, and at Bourdeaux ; and that people whispered to each other, in the parties and the saloons of the metropolis, "*This is the beginning of the end.*"

The same might be said of our beautiful Italy. Since the last news from Germany, the Austrian generals opposed to us showed themselves more and more confident ; while on our side, the Italian troops no longer manifested the same ardour. One of their chiefs, General Pino, who had at first manœuvred under my direction for the defence of Illyria, revealing the secret dismay which pervaded the ranks, suddenly quitted the army and retired to Milan, where he awaited the result of the campaign.

I went to confer upon the state of affairs with the prince viceroy, whom I found extremely uneasy, but firmly devoted to the emperor. He was much hurt at the rupture, and had no longer any confidence in the fortune of Napoleon : "It had been better," said he to me, "if he had lost, without too great a disadvantage, the two first battles in the commencement of the campaign ; he would have retreated in time behind the Rhine." I did not conceal from him that I had given him that advice, at Dresden, but that nothing could make an impression upon him. "It is," said I to him, "the more unfortunate, because at the first battle he loses in person, the political reorganization will be settled without him." Eugene was struck with this reflection, and for the first time, perhaps, he was awake to the instability of his political existence. I did not open myself further upon this occasion, having but little confidence in those about him. He at length owned to me, what I had foreseen, that he had strong reasons for believing that Bavaria was, at this moment, about to detach itself from our alliance ; that the Bavarian army upon the frontiers of Austria had made no movement to arrest those of the Austrians, who were advancing in great force, although slowly, through the valley of La Drave, towards the Tyrol ; that himself being no longer able to govern Italy, he was about to retreat behind the Isonzo, in order to interpose the defiles between him and the enemy. "If, contrary to all expectation," said I to him, "you cannot make a stand there, endeavour, for I have more confidence

in your talents than in your troops, at least to dispute for some time the country between the Piave and the Adige, in order to allow time for events to develop themselves. It will be doing a great deal, if, during the approaching winter, you can cover Mantua, Verona, Milan, and the mouths of the Po."

He immediately made his arrangements for retreating, and I, on my side, evacuated Laybach, after having left in the castle the shadow of a garrison, chiefly composed of convalescents, whom I placed under the command of Colonel Léger. I followed the army, which came to occupy the line of the Isonzo. The same day, the Austrians having appeared in form upon Trieste, Lieutenant-General Fresia finally evacuated that place by my orders, leaving in the castle a very small garrison only, commanded by Colonel Rabié, who, after a very gallant defence, capitulated about a month afterwards.

From the headquarters of Gradisca, I addressed my report to the emperor. I represented to him that the viceroy, thinking it his duty to listen only to prudential motives, had just ordered the retreat upon Isonzo ; that, in consequence of this movement, the Illyrian provinces were henceforth lost ; but that the objects to which the army of Italy would confine its efforts possessed also their advantages ; that they left nothing to chance, and might for some time yet ensure the tranquillity of Italy. I added that as my mission was now nearly at an end, I begged him to give me some other appointment, and that I awaited his orders.

While awaiting either the events, or Napoleon's decision with respect to me, I was induced to go and visit that dear and magnificent Lombardy, to the liberty of which I had devoted myself when I entered the career of high official duties. Alas ! that also was suffering under imperial oppression, and its political destiny depended but too much upon that of Napoleon.

In conquering Italy, we had introduced into it our activity, industry, and a taste for the arts and for luxury. Milan was

the city which derived the greatest advantages from the French Revolution, which we had transplanted there. Milan received a still greater lustre when it became the capital of a kingdom; a court, a council of state, a senate, a diplomatic corps, ministers, civil and military appointments, and tribunals of justice, added nearly twenty thousand inhabitants to its population, which exceeded one hundred thousand souls. Milan was considerably improved and embellished; but its brilliant period was of short duration, like that of all the kingdoms, which the ambition of the ruler soon exhausted both of men and money, in his vain intention of conquering the world. The Viceroy Eugene was soon nothing more in the eyes of the Lombards than the obedient executor of all his wishes. After the affair of Moscow, in Italy as in France, all the springs of government had lost their elasticity. The conviction of Napoleon's power was destroyed at the moment the illusion of his military fortune became eclipsed. Latterly Eugene seemed to fear becoming popular, lest he should excite his jealousy. Eugene, although a brave soldier and of approved loyalty, was parsimonious, rather light, too docile to the advice of those who flattered his taste, but little acquainted with the character of the people whom he governed, and placing too much confidence in a few ambitious Frenchmen; he needed an equal degree of political knowledge to that which he possessed of military affairs. During these latter days of difficulty, this prince completed the people's discontent by conscriptions and forced requisitions: in short, the viceroy yielded too much both to the example and the impulse of the sovereign ruler. His position became the more difficult, as he had soon against him both the partisans of Italian independence and those of the ancient order of things. The first becoming daily more uneasy, looked round for assistance. Like his adoptive father, Eugene found no other, for the maintenance of authority, but in his army, which he lost no time in organizing and disciplining.

All was suspense in Italy. It was known that three large armies in Germany surrounded, so to speak, the emperor's, with the intention of manœuvring upon the basis of his line of operations at Dresden, and, if the events of war should prove favourable to them, of uniting in the rear of this line between the Elbe and the Saal. It was likewise known, that to oppose these three grand allied armies, Napoleon had scarcely two hundred thousand men, divided into eleven bodies of infantry, four of cavalry, and his guard, which presented a formidable reserve. We had just learnt that he had resolved, in order to avoid being completely surrounded, to abandon his central position at Dresden, to manœuvre at Magdeburg and on the Saal. Suddenly, towards the end of October, I received from the viceroy's headquarters a note, conceived in these terms: "For refusing to give up anything, he has lost all." My anxiety and impatience to know the extent of what had taken place may easily be imagined. The next day gloomy reports were propagated respecting the fatal battles of Leipsic, which might have the effect of forcing Napoleon back upon the Rhine, followed by all Europe in arms. Now were realized all my presentiments, all I had foreseen. But what would become of us? What fate was reserved for the tottering empire? It was easy to foresee that the emperor's enormous power, if not entirely destroyed, would at least be diminished. On the one hand, I was not blind to the species of opposition he might meet with in the interior of the empire; all the constituent elements of public power were known to me; I could appreciate the persons possessing more or less influence, and form an opinion of their courage and energy. A bold man was now necessary, and there were none but cowards. The only man who, by his talents and ability, might have directed events and saved the revolution, had no political nerve, and was fearful of losing his head. As to myself, who certainly would not have been wanting in resolution, I was far removed from the centre, whether by fortuitous chances or by preconcerted

arrangements. I was burning with impatience; and, having resolved to brave everything, in order to re-enter the capital, there to resume the secret clues of a plot which would have conducted us to a happy issue, was already on my way, when a letter from the emperor, dated Mayence, ordered me, in answer to my last despatch, to proceed to take the government of Rome, which, till then, I had only nominally enjoyed. I perceived the blow, but there were no means of parrying it; the man who was thus losing the empire, found himself still secure amid the wrecks of his military power. I lingered on my journey in order to observe the course of events, and in expectation of receiving from my confidential friends in Paris positive information as to the sensation which would be produced by the sudden return of the emperor, after these fresh disasters. But how well I knew the ground, and how correctly had I judged of the men who occupied it! There were not twenty senators who did not consider the empire out of danger, because the emperor was safe! Not one great functionary who suspected that the armies of Europe were capable of crossing the Rhine. In spite of the stupor which universally prevailed, a wilful blindness still created illusions in favour of power. I must, however, except that able man, whom I have sufficiently designated; with deep craftiness and disguised irony, he seemed to espy the moment of a fall, which appeared to him not to be as yet matured.

Italy, in the meantime, was on the point of undergoing great changes; abandoning successively the Isonzo, the Tagliamento, the Piave, and the Brenta, the viceroy had recently repassed the Adige, and fixed his headquarters at Verona. The Austrian army, continually advancing and receiving reinforcements, established itself at Vicenza, at Bassano, and Montebello, already forming the blockades of Venice, Palma, Nuova, and Osopo. In the secret negotiations with which I had been intrusted, the cession of the Venetian states, as far as the Adige, had been consented to,

as one of the preliminaries of peace with Austria. But where would the pretensions of that power now stop? The two armies remained thus in presence of each other, as in winter-quarters. It was upon the South of Italy that all eyes were fixed, and whence were expected the military and political events which would impart activity to the two armies in observation of each other on the Brenta and the Adige. Murat, conceiving the fortunes of Napoleon entirely lost after the affair of Leipsic, had returned in all haste to Naples, to resume the plan which he supposed would maintain him on the throne, even after the ruin of him who had placed him on it. In an interview with Count de Miër, at the headquarters of Ohlendorf in Thuringia, on the 23rd of October, he had prepared, as it were, his accession to the coalition and his treaty with the Austrian court. I had not at that time any certain data respecting Murat's intentions, but I foresaw his change of politics. I have learnt that upon arriving at Lodi, on his way from Leipsic and Milan, whilst he was changing horses, several Italians of distinction were surrounding his coach; and upon one of them asking if he would soon come and assist the viceroy, "Certainly," replied he, in his Gascon manner, "before a month is over, I shall come to assist you with fifty thousand good fellows," and he set off with the rapidity of lightning. I inferred from this that he had said just the contrary to what he intended. In fact, it thus formed part of Murat's plans to enter into alliance with Austria, at the same time that he represented himself to the Italians as the supporter of their independence; I also learnt that, while traversing Northern Italy, he had received very graciously several Italian noblemen and general officers, who were also labouring for the liberation of their country, promising them to embrace their cause and lead an army on the Po.

Upon my arrival at Rome, I found General Miollis and the administrator Janet labouring under mistrust and suspicions respecting Murat's conduct; who they told me

was openly joining the coalition, and was organizing a new army, partly composed of Neapolitans, Italian deserters, Corsicans, and Frenchmen. Every information from Naples announced that he had just abolished the continental system from his dominions, granting, at the same time, the entry of his ports to vessels of every nation; it was asserted that he was not only negotiating with the court of Vienna, but also with Lord William Bentinck, hoping to conclude a separate peace with Great Britain. The fears of the military commandant of Rome were shared by the viceroy, who despatched his aide-de-camp, Gifflenga, to Naples, in order to ascertain the king's intentions. This young officer, but little acquainted with the arts of that court, was cajoled by a few fair promises of peace and friendship.

Murat, declaring himself for the independence of Italy, found a party within the Roman states, among the *Carbonari* and the *Crivellari*, a species of political illuminati, who were raised among the nobles, the jurisconsults, and the Roman prelates. A priest of the name of Battaglia had just roused to insurrection the country about Viterbo; he had placed himself at the head of a band of insurgents, seizing the public treasuries, and levying contributions upon persons attached to the French interest. At the same time, incendiary writings and proclamations were profusely spread throughout the pontifical domains. Miollis having set in motion the armed force, soon dispersed the bands of insurgents; Battaglia having been arrested and conducted to Rome, his depositions sufficiently proved that he was the agent of the Neapolitan consul Zuccari, who was employed by his court to excite insurrection against the French dominion. It appeared to me that great circumspection and prudence were requisite in opposing the practices of the Neapolitans, and that nothing should be undertaken unadvisedly.

Murat, however, had set his troops in motion towards

Upper Italy. Early in December, a division of Neapolitan infantry and a brigade of cavalry, with sixteen pieces of artillery, entered Rome ; these troops were commanded by General Carascosa. Although the emperor had given orders that the King of Naples should be treated as an ally, *who was ready to show his good intentions ;* and notwithstanding the movement of this body had been concerted with the viceroy, General Miollis received the Neapolitans with much suspicion, ordering Civita Vecchia and the castle of St. Angelo to be put into a posture of defence ; the money-chests, and other precious articles, were all removed to the latter fortress. Three or four Neapolitan divisions succeeded each other, taking the road, through the Abruzzo, upon Ancona, and through Rome, either upon Tuscany, Pesaro, Rimini, or Bologna. It was to this last city that Murat had just sent Prince Pignatelli Strongoli, less to trace the route of his army, the object of whose appearance upon the Po seemed to be that of checking the Austrians, than to dispose all the friends of the independent cause to assist him in his enterprises. Pignatelli was commissioned to gain him partisans.

In the meantime, I received from the emperor an order to return to Naples, to endeavour to dissuade Murat from declaring against him. I was instructed to conciliate him, and to employ the utmost address in this negotiation, and even to flatter him with the prospect that the marches of Pesaro and Ancona, the spoils of the Roman state, and the objects of his ambition, should be ceded to him. My arrival at Naples was preceded by three letters from the emperor addressed to Joachim, one of them announcing my mission. I made my entry at the court of Naples about the middle of December. Joachim's court was certainly a singular one, and his Vesuvian royalty (*royauté de Vésuve*) most precarious. Murat possessed great courage, but little mind ; no great personage of his time carried farther than himself whatever was ridiculous in ornament and the affectation of

display ; it was he whom the soldiers called the *King Franconi*. Napoleon, however, who did not mistake his brother-in-law's character, erroneously supposed that Queen Caroline, his sister, an ambitious and haughty woman, would govern her husband, and that without her Murat could not be a king. But, from the commencement of his reign, suspecting the authority to which they wished to subject him as a husband, he endeavoured to free himself from it ; and the political circumstances in which he then found himself the more effectually opposed the queen's ascendency, as he was wholly surrounded by advisers who urged him to declare against Napoleon, representing this political change of system as a political necessity.

In a court where politics were nothing but cunning, gallantry dissoluteness, and external magnificence theatrical pomp, I found myself nearly, if the comparison be not considered too flattering to myself, as Plato did at the court of Dionysius. Upon my arrival, I was beset by the intriguers of both nations, among whom, under the mask of a kind of ingenuousness, I recognized some emissaries from Paris. There were also some of these in the king's council ; and I was particularly on my guard against a certain Marquess de G * * * *, who, of the two acceptations which his name has in Latin, had all the vigilance of the one, and none of the candour of the other. In my first conferences in the presence of Murat, I was obliged to maintain a great reserve ; I affected to be without instructions, and begged the king would explain his political situation to me. He confessed that it was critical and embarrassing ; that, on the one hand, he was placed between his people and his army, who detested all idea of persevering in an alliance with France ; on the other, between the emperor Napoleon, who had left him without the least guide, and was continually giving him fresh cause for disgust—and the allied sovereigns, who insisted upon his immediately declaring his entire accession to the coalition. Again, that the Italian chiefs required

him to concur in declaring the independence of their country, while the viceroy was decidedly opposed to all measures favourable to the independents, either by the emperor's orders, or to forward his own views. Lastly, added the king, I have to contend against the manœuvres of Lord Bentinck, who, from his headquarters in Sicily, is endeavouring to effect an insurrection in Calabria, and who assists with money and promises the *Carbonari* throughout the whole extent of my kingdom. I told the king that it was not for me to offer him any advice ; that, as to himself, a decided resolution was all that was necessary ; that to induce him to take one, and when taken firmly to adhere to it, was all my duty required of me.

The king, upon the breaking up of the conference, owned to me that having, a month before, communicated to the emperor his fears that an Austrian detachment would march towards the mouths of the Po, he had entreated him, upon this occasion, freely to renounce the direct possession of Italy, and by declaring its independence, thus to complete the benefits he had already bestowed upon that country. I replied to the king, that it was difficult to imagine the emperor would make a virtue of necessity ; but that, supposing he did, I should claim the priority for France—I, who had so often, and so vainly, entreated Napoleon to render the war a national one.

My other conferences were all equally useless. Murat had committed himself: his council impelled him more and more into the interests of the coalition—a political situation, incompatible with his project of calling Italy to independence. I pointed this out to him, but in vain ; I then confined myself to advise him, in a secret conference, to increase his army, to have good troops, and, at any cost, to attach to his cause the sect of the *Carbonari*, whom he had, with much imprudence, persecuted, and who seemed to me to acquire greater consistence, in proportion as events became more serious. I concluded by advising the king

not to rely too much upon his princely crowd of Neapolitan nobles, but rather to surround himself by people whose *excellence* did not alone consist in their title, and to whose firmness and devotion he could intrust himself.

My mission to Naples was not without its charms. I breathed, in the midst of winter, the air of the finest climate in Europe; I found myself well received and respected by a brilliant court; but all my thoughts and looks were continually turned towards France. She was threatened with invasion; foreigners were at her gates; what would the emperor do? what would become of him? I was convinced that he would not have greatness of mind enough to induce him to indentify himself with the nation. Isolated, his ruin was certain: but the effects of his gradual fall might yet, for a long time, prove fatal to the country.

Receiving no certain information, and having but vague notions upon the state of affairs in Paris, I hastened to resume my journey towards Rome, to which city my private correspondence was addressed. I considered it the more imperative upon me to quit Murat's court, as I knew for certain that the arrival of Count Neyperg, the Austrian plenipotentiary, empowered to conclude the King of Naples' accession to the coalition, was hourly expected, and I should then have found myself compromised at Naples. Having once more entered the ancient capital of the world, I flew to open my despatches from Paris. They contained the intelligence I had every moment expected, of the violation of the neutrality of Switzerland by the allies, and the invasion of our territory by the eastern frontier. By them I also learnt that the emperor could scarcely assemble, between Strasburg and Mayence, some sixty thousand men in the space of a month, so great had been the ravages inflicted upon his armies by epidemic disorders and disorganization; but that he still obstinately rejected the *fundamental bases* (bases sommaires) which the allies had just sent him from Frankfort, notwithstanding that Talleyrand, in the council,

strongly urged him to make peace, assuring him, in the most positive terms, that he deceived himself as to the energies of the nation, and that it would not second his efforts, and that he would ultimately find himself abandoned. Deaf to these prudent counsels, what did Napoleon meditate, at this important crisis? A *coup d'état*: that of proclaiming himself dictator. Indebted for his rise to the factions and storms of a revolution in which *words* did much, he persuaded himself (from a confusion of ideas respecting ancient history), that the title of dictator alone would produce a great effect. He, however, gave this up, upon the representations of of Talleyrand and Cambacérès. They observed to him that he must exercise the power without assuming the name; that he could even lock up the senate-house without arrogating any fresh title. He acted upon their suggestions; the senate-house was from this moment placed under a guard.

Such was the total sum of my correspondence; and, yielding to the impressions such intelligence produced, I wrote to the emperor the following letter:—

"I have taken leave of the King of Naples; I ought not to conceal from your majesty any of the causes which have paralyzed the natural activity of that prince.

"1st. It is the uncertainty in which you have left him, with respect to the command of the armies of Italy. The king, in these two last campaigns has given you so many proofs of his devotion and his military abilities, that he expected from you this mark of confidence. He complains of a twofold humiliation, that of being the object of your suspicions, and of being reduced to an equality with your generals.

"2nd. Such is the language continually held to the king: 'If, in order to preserve Italy to the emperor, you deprive your kingdom of its troops, the English will effect a landing there, and will excite insurrections, the more dangerous as the Neapolitans loudly complain of the French influence.

Besides, it is added, what is the situation of this empire? That of being without an army, and of being discouraged by the events of a campaign, which the enemy do not consider as the termination of its misfortunes, since the Rhine is no longer a barrier, and since the emperor, far from being able to preserve Italy, can scarcely prevent the invasion of his German, Swiss, and Spanish frontiers.' 'Take care of yourself, rely only upon your own resources,' is the advice he is continually receiving from Paris. 'The emperor can no longer do anything for France; how then can he secure your dominions? If, at the period of his greatest power, he could think of incorporating Naples with the empire, what sacrifice can he be expected to make for you now? He would, at this moment, abandon you for a fortress.'

"3rd. On the other hand, your enemies have contrasted this picture of the situation of France with that of the immense advantages which are likely to accrue to the king by joining the coalition: 'This prince,' say they, 'by so doing, consolidates his throne, and aggrandizes his power: instead of making to the emperor a useless sacrifice of his glory and his crown, he will diffuse over both the most brilliant lustre, by proclaiming himself the defender of Italy and the guarantee of her independence. But if, on the contrary, he declare himself for your majesty, his army will abandon him, and his people rise in insurrection. If he abandon your cause, all Italy crowds beneath his banners.' Such is the language addressed to the king by men who are closely attached to your government. Perhaps, by doing so, they only deceive themselves as to the means of being serviceable to your majesty. Peace is necessary to the world; and to persuade the king to place himself at the head of Italy is, in their opinion, the surest method of forcing you to make peace.

"I arrived at Rome on the 18th; here, as throughout all Italy, the word *independence* has acquired a magical virtue. It cannot be denied, that under this banner are arranged

opposing interests; but each country demands a local government; and each complains of being obliged to repair to Paris, upon subjects even of the least importance. The French government, at so great a distance from the capital, only causes them heavy charges without any equivalent.

"'All,' say the Romans, 'that we know of the government of France is conscriptions, taxes, vexations, privations, and sacrifices. Add to which, we have no commerce, either at home or abroad; we have no means of disposing of our produce, and for the trifling articles we obtain from foreign countries we pay most extravagantly.'

"Sire, when your majesty was at the acme of glory and power, I had the courage to tell you the truth, for it was the only thing of which you then stood in need. Now I owe it to you equally, but with greater delicacy, since you are unfortunate. Your speech to the legislative body would have made a deep impression upon Europe, and would have touched all hearts, if your majesty had added, to the wish you expressed for peace, a magnanimous renunciation of your former plan of universal monarchy. So long as you are not explicit upon this point, the allied powers will believe, or will say, that this system is only deferred, and that you will avail yourself of events to recommence it. The French nation itself will be labouring under the same apprehensions. It appears to me, that if, under these circumstances, you were to concentrate all your forces between the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Rhine, and make a candid declaration that you would not overstep those natural frontiers, you might then command both the wishes and the arms of the nation in defence of your empire; and, *certes*, this empire would still be the finest and most powerful in the world; it would still be sufficient for your glory and the prosperity of France. I am convinced that you can never procure a real peace, but at this price. I tremble at being the only one to hold this language to you! Beware of the lying lips of your sycophants; experience

should have taught you to appreciate them. These are they who induced you to march into Spain, Poland, and Russia; who persuaded you to remove your real friends; and who, still more recently, dissuaded you from signing a peace at Dresden. These are they who now deceive you, and who exaggerate your resources. You have still enough left to be happy, and to make France peaceful and prosperous; but you have nothing more, and of this truth all Europe is persuaded: it is even useless any longer to employ delusion—to deceive her is no longer possible.

"I entreat your majesty not to reject my counsels; they are the effusions of a heart which has never ceased to be attached to you. I have not the foolish vanity of affecting to see more or clearer than others; were all equally candid, they would hold the same language to you. They would have spoken as I did, after the peace of Tilsit,[1] after the peace of Vienna, before the war against Russia, and, lastly, at Dresden.

"It is mortifying for the dignity of human nature, that I should be the only one who dares to tell you what I think. Should your majesty have to undergo new misfortunes, I shall not have to reproach myself with having suppressed the truth. In heaven's name, put an end to the war; let mankind enjoy, at least, a momentary repose."

My letter was scarcely sent off, when Napoleon struck his last *coup-d'état*, the dissolution of the legislative body. From the palace of the Tuileries, which ought to have resounded with protestations of homage and fidelity, but which was suddenly transformed into an arena for pride, rage, and malice, legislators, magistrates, generals, and public functionaries were seen departing, struck with fear and apprehension. All were penetrated with profound grief, at seeing a separation between the chief of the state and the nation, at the moment when there was the greatest necessity of mutual confidence and assistance. Under what auspices, then, was the third lustrum of the empire about to

be opened? Was this year to be the last of its duration? What a bad omen for the defence of the country, invaded by five foreign armies, marching under the banners of all the potentates of Europe!

In order to continue to impose upon Austria, the emperor, who still thought he had it in his power to detach that power from the coalition whenever he pleased, at the commencement of the decisive campaign intrusted the regency to Maria-Louisa; so that the empire, in its last struggles, had actually two governments, the one in Napoleon's camp, the other at Paris. He soon even increased the absurdity, both in theory and practice, of this regency, by nominating his brother Joseph to the lieutenancy-general of the empire, almost at the very moment he had invested the empress with the executive power. This was only infusing one more ingredient of division into his government.

Such had not been the idea I had formed of a regency, of which, but for the evil destiny of the revolution, which detained me on the other side of the Alps, I could have ensured the success.

I ask, who, in this jumble of power, was the person or authority that could really be considered as the depositary of Napoleon's will? Joseph was but a counterpoise to the arch-chancellor Cambacérès, who himself counterbalanced the empress and Joseph, and the empress was only introduced for form's sake. Cambacérès was the grand pivot of the regency of Paris; but he was subjected to the *surveillance* of the minister of police, a real domestic inquisitor. In itself, the police is nothing but an hidden power, the strength of which consists in the opinion it can impart of its force; then indeed it can become one of the greatest state weapons; but in the hands of a Savary, the talisman of the police had been broken for ever.

From what has been observed, it may be seen that no government was ever ready to fall under so many precautions, perhaps even from excess of precaution. It is, how-

ever, due to truth to say that all the authorities were unanimously of opinion on one point, viz., the impossibility of preserving the government in the hands of Napoleon. But no one had the courage to declare this openly, and to act in consequence. How disgraceful it is that so many able and experienced men should have tamely permitted the destruction of the state, and suffered the influence of foreign powers to bring about a revolution, which the country in tears entreated to be permitted to commence.

O you, who have said to me since, after the blow was struck, "Why were not you there?" how much this expression of your regret betrays your baseness! I was not there, precisely because I ought to have been there, and because it was foreseen that, by the force of things alone, all the interests of the revolution, of which I was now the only representative, would have prevailed, and averted the catastrophe.

I was so little mistaken as to our real situation, that, anxious to hasten my return, and terminate my mission, I wrote the emperor a second letter, in which I represented to him how contrary it was to his dignity that I should remain in the quality of his governor-general at Rome, when invaded by the Neapolitans; besides that it became impossible that Rome, Tuscany, and the Genoese states could be preserved, if the King of Naples acceded to the coalition; and that, in my opinion, sound policy required that he should enter into arrangements with that prince, to abandon to him the provisionary military occupation of the countries which it was impossible for us to guard or defend; that, by this, we should obtain the double advantage of saving our garrison, and indirectly re-attaching the King of Naples to the French cause; that, as to myself, finding my dignity wounded at Rome, where my authority could no longer possess any weight, I had taken the road to Florence, where I should await his final instructions.

I found Florence, like the rest of Italy, unquiet, in sus-

pense, and divided as to the opinion that might be formed of the movements of Murat towards Upper Italy. The adherents of Napoleon asserted that the Neapolitans, still faithful and devoted to his cause, only marched on the Po to second our efforts against the common enemy, and that Murat would come to command them in person. The partisans of independence saw nothing in the approach of the Neapolitans, but the near arrival of auxiliaries, who would assist them in throwing off the French yoke. Others, lastly, could not see without uneasiness, upon the theatre of Upper Italy, a new army, which, in their eyes, was nothing but a collection of vagabonds and thieves, forced into the service, and completely undisciplined. "What," said they to me, "is to be expected from a Carascosa, a man who supplies a want of ability by boasting ; from a Macdonaldo, formerly the aide-de-camp of the old Cisalpine general Trivulzi, whose mistress he married, and who, not being able to obtain employment, either in France or in the kingdom of Italy, has entered the service of Murat in despair ; from the ex-general Lecchi, a Lombardian, unfortunately notorious for his cruelties, his exactions, and his plunderings in Spain, and who, brought before a council of war in France, was dismissed without employment? Perhaps young Lavauguyon will be panegyrized, recently restored to Murat's favour, who, in a jealous fit, had disgraced him in 1811, a time when, at the head of the chosen body-guard, he was, according to some, too much noticed by Queen Caroline, and to others, a still more happy rival to Murat. The other generals possessed neither consistency nor respect. Thus I soon knew to what extent I could rely upon this Neapolitan army : it was composed of forty battalions, and twenty squadrons, in all twenty thousand men, and fifty pieces of artillery ; in other respects it was tolerably provided, but its discipline was very bad.

The government of Tuscany was the more uneasy respecting its arrival, as on the 10th of December the English had

effected a landing at Via-Reggio, and had afterwards appeared before Leghorn; but the firmness of the French garrison had compelled them to re-embark. This attempt of theirs, however, appeared to me only to be a first essay of their strength.[1]

It was in the midst of these circumstances that I presented myself at the court of the grand duchess, where I met with a most gracious reception. In the duchess I found a very singular woman; and this time I had leisure to study her character. Without beauty or charms, Eliza was not void of wit, and the first impulse of her heart was good; but an incurable defect in judgment, added to very amorous propensities, continually betrayed her into errors and even excesses. Her mania consisted in imitating the habits of her brother, affecting his *brusquerie*, his predilection for pomp and military parade, and neglecting the arts of peace, and even literature, of which formerly she had professed herself the protectress. In a country where agriculture and commerce had flourished to so great a degree, she was solely occupied in forming a splendid and servile court, in organizing whole battalions of conscripts, and

[1] M. Fouché is quite mistaken here. We know for certain, and from an eye-witness, that the re-embarking of the English troops could not be attributed to the resistance of the French garrison. Lord Bentinck, who commanded this expedition, might have taken Leghorn, if it had been his pleasure, by landing a few pieces of artillery, and attacking the weakest part of that town. One single hour would have rendered him master of the place. In fact, it was expected he would do so, and nothing could equal the surprise of the French and the inhabitants when, on the morning of the 12th, at the moment they thought the battery would begin, they heard the English had left altogether. The place was so weakly supplied with troops (there were not five hundred men, and even most of these were young conscripts), that all those persons who held any employment in the administration were obliged to take the musket. A deputation, composed of the notable inhabitants of Leghorn (Italians), went on board the English squadron, to make it known that the French commander refused to surrender. The reply made by Lord B. was, "That he would try what cannon would do." It would appear that his lordship's motive for retiring, was his unwillingness to injure a town which had always been a favourite residence with the English, and which, according to the then state of affairs, could not fail soon to be liberated from the French domination.—*English Editor.*

appointing and cashiering generals. There, where formerly the universities of Pisa and Florence, and the academies della Crusca, del Cimento, and del Disegno had shed so great a lustre, she permitted learning to languish and decay, granting her protection solely to actors, rope-dancers, and musicians. In short, Eliza was feared, but not beloved.

As to myself, far from having reason to complain of her, I found her attentive, affectionate, resigned even to the crosses with which she was threatened, and willingly yielding her own opinions to my experience and advice. From that moment I directed her politics. She allowed me to see how much she was hurt that Napoleon was about to lose, not only his empire, through his obstinacy, but even to sacrifice without hesitation the establishments of which his family was in possession. I then guessed all her fears, and well understood that she was alarmed at the precarious situation of Tuscany, which it grieved her to think was about to escape from her hands. I did not conceal from her that, at Dresden, I had given Napoleon the most sincere and wholesome advice; .that I warned him he was about to stake his crown against the whole of Europe: that he ought to give up Germany, and then entrench himself upon the Rhine, calling the nation to his assistance; that he would be compelled against his own inclination to have recourse to this; but that then he would adopt, too late, a measure exacted by necessity.

In the meantime, the different *corps d'armée* of Murat successively arrived at their destination, either at Rome, or in the Marches. General Lavauguyon, his aide-de-camp, who was at Rome at the head of five thousand Neapolitans, suddenly announcing himself as commander-in-chief of the Roman States, took possession of the country. General Miollis, who had only eighteen hundred Frenchmen under his command, shut himself up in the castle of St. Angelo. Lavauguyon immediately summoned him to surrender, and

invested the castle ; he demanded an interview with Miollis, which the latter decidedly refused.

But shortly afterwards, Murat himself, who had left Naples on the 23rd of January, made his entry into Rome with all that pomp to which he was so fondly attached ; and was received by the independents with great demonstrations of joy.

Murat caused it to be proposed to General Miollis, as well as to General Lasalcette, who defended Civita Vecchia with two thousand men, to return to France with their garrisons ; both generals rejected his offer, and the king left a corps of observation to blockade both these places. At the same time he had caused the siege of Ancona to be commenced, a citadel into which General Barbou had retired. However, as yet there had been no open hostilities ; but the King of Naples, at the head of nine thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, having entered Bologna, occupied Modena, Ferrara, and Cento. His equivocal conduct, and the movement of his troops, which were advancing upon Parma and Tuscany, no longer left any doubt upon his intended defection. Joachim entered Bologna on the 1st of February. That very day he detached from his army General Minutolo, with eight hundred men, to take possession of Tuscany, to the government of which he nominated General Joseph Lecchi. Intelligence of this had no sooner arrived, than the utmost consternation reigned in the court of the grand duchess, who complained bitterly of being thus despoiled by her brother-in-law. Being summoned to the council, and having been previously informed that the people everywhere met the Neapolitans with open arms, I advised the grand duchess to yield to the storm, and to retire either to Leghorn or Lucca. This resolution being taken, she enjoined her husband, Prince Felix Baciocchi, to evacuate Tuscany.

I was a witness to this convulsion, which, upon a smaller scale, was but the rehearsal of what was soon to take place

at Paris. But in Tuscany there was no effusion of blood—on one side it was nothing but a flight, and on the other but a sarcastic war of words, with which the Florentines pursued the chiefs and inferior agents of the government. Thus Baciocchi, upon his accession of fortune, had thought proper to change his name, and to adopt that of *Felice* (the happy), instead of *Pasquale*, a name as ridiculous in Italy as that of *Jocrisse*[1] in France. The Florentines, therefore, in allusion to this, upon his forced retreat indulged this *jeu de mots*, *Quando eri Felice*, *eravamo Pasquali; adesso che sei ritornato Pasquale*, *saremo felici*.

The prefect of Florence, my intimate friend, was not spared in squibs of this kind. He was very strict in matters of conscription, and whenever a conscript alleged some reason for being excused, he generally dismissed him with this formula, "fit for marching" (*bon à marcher*). When the authorities, therefore, were obliged to leave the city, he found written on his door, in large characters, *bon à marcher*.

Whilst the grand duchess and I had retired to Lucca, Baciocchi was still in possession of the citadel and fortifications of the cities of Florence and Volterra. I expected, from day to day, the powers I had requested for the military evacuation of Tuscany and the Roman States. The grand duchess was equally desirous of seeing Tuscany delivered from the French troops, in the hope of coming to some arrangement with Murat, whose fortune appeared to her to offer more favourable chances than that of Napoleon. She was especially mistrustful of little Lagarde, whom the emperor had set over her in quality of commissary-general of police, and who was indebted to me for his fortune. She even went so far as to suspect that he sent Napoleon accounts injurious to her as well as to me. Eliza spoke very openly on the subject, and, one day, expressed her anxious

[1] The character of *Jocrisse*, in the French plays, to which Brunet, of the *Théâtre des Varietés*, has given such celebrity, is somewhat like the *Péter* of the Stranger, or Liston's *Tony Lumpkin*.—*English Editor*.

wish to get the *portefeuille* of this commissary into her possession, in order to see if her suspicions were well founded. Being myself persuaded that Lagarde's correspondence would be more unfavourable to me than to the grand duchess, I did not attempt to dissuade her from it, when she told me that she intended employing him on a mission to Pisa, and that she would afterwards have him stopped upon the road by men hired and masked for that purpose. I was much gratified in seeing a commissary-general of police thus robbed upon the highway—one, too, who while affecting bluntness and extreme good-nature, boasted of possessing more cunning than the most wily Italian. It was necessary to undeceive him. In fact, upon his return from Pisa, the persons hired for the purpose stopped him, made him alight from his coach, and whilst two of them held him on the edge of a ditch, with their guns levelled at him, the others carried off his money, jewels, and even his papers, which were in a trunk in front of the carriage. When we saw people in the greatest alarm come to inform us of the misfortune of the commissary-general, the grand duchess and myself had great difficulty to preserve our gravity, and we were obliged to withdraw aside to give vent to our inclination for laughter. This *opera seria*, however, disappointed us; the pretended papers of the commissary-general which were brought us, consisted of a set of numbers of the *Moniteur*, which Lagarde, having a coach with a false bottom, where he concealed his secret papers, had placed in the box in front. He escaped with the loss of his money and his jewels; and, according to every probability, with fear alone, for he could not fail to indemnify himself either at Florence or Paris.

Murat, in the meantime, who now kept the diplomatists in full play, endeavoured to fill all Italy with his name. He wrote me letter after letter, repeating that his alliance with the coalition appeared to him the only means of preserving the throne, and requiring me to tell the emperor the whole truth upon the actual state of Italy. I answered, that I had

anticipated him, in that point, and that he had no need to encourage me to tell the emperor the truth; that I had always thought that to conceal it was to betray princes; I insisted upon the necessity of the King of Naples keeping up a good army as a means of influence with the coalition; above all I recommended him to avoid all irresolution; it was extremely essential to his interests, I told him, to create for himself a great respect, and to make his character an object of esteem; and since his resolution appeared wavering, I owed it to the friendship he had testified for me, to own to him that the least hesitation would be fatal; that it would draw upon him general want of confidence; that he could besides promote the interests of his country by contributing to the general pacification, and by supporting the dignity of thrones and the independence of nations. I added that I saw with regret the risings in the country; that those passions which could not be gratified ought not to be excited. Being also requested by this prince to send him, in writing, the reflections which I had communicated to him at Naples upon the constitutions required of him by the partisans of liberty, I warned him against suffering himself to be induced to throw into the midst of the Neapolitan people ideas for which they were not at all prepared; in short, said I to him, I fear that the word "constitution," which I hear everywhere upon my road, is nothing with the majority but a pretext for throwing off all obedience.

The troops of Murat had arrived on the southern banks of the Po. By taking possession of Tuscany and the Roman States, he had declared against the emperor, his brother-in-law, in favour of Austria. He had bound himself, without binding the opposite party; for the treaty he had signed at Naples on the 11th of January, with the Count de Neyperg, was not ratified.

In consequence of the seriousness of events, I judged it expedient again to confer with Murat in person, and I had a secret interview with him at Modena. There I convinced

him, since he had taken a decisive part, that he ought to announce it. "If you had," said I to him, "as much firmness of character as excellence of heart, you would be superior in Italy to the coalition. You can only conquer it here by much decision and frankness." He still hesitated; I communicated to him the latest news I had received from Paris. Determined by this, he confided to me his idea of a proclamation, or rather declaration of war, in which I suggested some alterations, which he made. This proclamation, dated from Bologna, was conceived in the following terms:—

"Soldiers! so long as I thought the Emperor Napoleon fought for the peace and the happiness of France, I fought at his side; but now illusion is impossible; the emperor's whole wish is for war. I should betray the interests of my former country, those of my dominions, and yours, did I not immediately separate my arms from his, to unite them with those of the allied powers whose magnanimous intentions are to re-establish the dignity of thrones and the independence of nations.

"I know that attempts are made to warp the patriotism of the Frenchmen who compose a part of my army, by false sentiments of honour and fidelity; as if any honour and fidelity were shown in subjecting the world to the mad ambition of the Emperor Napoleon.

"Soldiers!—There are no longer but two banners in Europe: upon one you read—Religion, Morality, Justice, Moderation, Laws, Peace, and Happiness!—upon the other, Persecution, Deceit, Violence, Tyranny, War, and Grief, in every family: choose."

I had also to treat with Murat upon a particular business, in which my own affairs were interested; I had to claim, as governor-general of the Roman states and afterwards of Illyria, the arrears of my salary, amounting to the sum of one hundred and seventy thousand francs. The King of Naples, having seized the Roman states and the public revenues, became responsible to me for my debt. He gave

an order for it, the execution of which was attended with some delay ; however, before leaving Italy, I was enabled to say that I had not made war at my own expense.

At Lucca, I again found the grand duchess in much trouble, and extremely uneasy respecting the aspect of affairs. I announced to her that Murat was at length determined upon raising troops, but that I, nevertheless, doubted whether his operations would be directed by sufficient vigour and rectitude, to command the confidence of his new allies ; that the Austrian ministers reproached him with being a Frenchman, and, above all, of being too much attached to the emperor ; that the revolutionists, who at this moment governed Florence, affirmed openly that the King of Naples was in intelligence with France, and that he was deceiving the Italians ; that they even went so far as to impute to my advice the inaction of the Neapolitan troops, whom the Austrians were impatient to see marched against the viceroy, who was about to be immediately attacked by General Count Bellegarde. I lastly informed her that I had left Murat ill with vexation ; that he was aware of the critical situation in which he was placed ; but that, henceforth, it would be difficult for my councils to reach him.

A few days after, I received from the minister at war a despatch, containing the emperor's instructions relative to the evacuation of the Roman and Tuscan states. To these was added a letter for the King of Naples, which I was ordered to deliver to him in person ; I was also instructed to make him, at the same time, certain confidential communications, to be modified according to the position in which I found that prince. I immediately set off for Bologna, where Murat then was. As far as Florence I experienced no difficulty ; but, on my arrival in that town, the new authorities notified to me that I could neither continue my journey nor stop at Florence, and that I must retire to Prato, there to await the king's answer. I immediately despatched a courier to him, and returned to Lucca, preferring a resi-

dence in that town, Prato being already in insurrection. I soon received Murat's answer, who informed me that he had already ordered his generals to treat with me respecting the evacuation of Tuscany and the Roman states.

The powers with which the emperor had invested me came very *à propos*. The greater part of the French troops which were in Tuscany were concentrated at Leghorn; those who were at Pisa seemed to make a show of resistance. The Neapolitan general, Minutolo, had already marched with a column of Murat's army from Florence to Leghorn; at Pisa there had been some hostilities between this troop and a French detachment; they were now about to become more serious. Informed of this event, I left Lucca with the utmost expedition, and presented myself at the advanced posts. Having made known my powers, I immediately stipulated a convention, by which the French troops were to give up the posts and fortresses they occupied, and return to France; I immediately gave orders to the garrisons of Leghorn and Tuscany to fall back upon Genoa.

A few days afterwards, in virtue of the same powers, I treated with Lieutenant-General Lecchi, the King of Naples' governor in Tuscany, for the evacuation of the Roman states. This new convention stipulated the giving up of the castle of St. Angelo and of Civita Vecchia to the Neapolitans. The French garrisons were to be conveyed by sea to Marseilles, at the expense of the King of Naples.

Thus ended my mission in Italy, the termination of which I so much wished for, in order to re-enter my country, at that time in so wretched a condition; it was inundated by foreign troops, who were advancing nearer and nearer towards the capital, the approaches even to which Napoleon was reduced to defend. At such a distance, I had some difficulty in accounting for the progress of certain events; thus, why the two allied armies again separated after having beaten Napoleon at La Rhotière, instead of marching directly

and without delay to Paris. Such a movement would have anticipated by two months the events which occurred at the close of March, and consequently avoided many disasters, and prevented the useless effusion of much blood and many tears. But the allies had nothing ready, at that time, in Paris; and the cabinets, who were not inclined for the regency, prolonged, doubtless with much regret, the calamities of war, in order to form other plans, and produce different results. As to the congress of Chatillon, I imagined it would terminate as that of Prague had done. Everything announced that the catastrophe of this grand drama would soon arrive.

Before setting off for France, I proceeded to Volta, the headquarters of the prince viceroy; he had effected his retreat upon the Mincio; and, upon the King of Naples' declaration of war against France, had fought with the Austrians one of those battles which, being of no decisive effect as to politics, are only productive of military glory. I had two private conferences with the viceroy, in which I represented to him that fighting battles was now the more useless, as every thing would be decided within the environs of Paris; I dissuaded him from obeying the emperor's orders to march the army of Italy upon the Vosges: first, because it was now too late for a junction to be effected; and secondly, because by crossing the Alps, he would for ever lose his Lombardian possessions. Eugene owned to me that Murat had made him a secret proposal to unite their forces, for the purpose of sharing Italy, after having sent away the French troops, and that he had rejected this absurd offer; that his declaration of war had placed him, Eugene, in the greatest embarrassment; and that he feared he could hold out no longer, if Murat should serve the Austrians with any degree of zeal. I made him easy upon this point, being well acquainted with the uncertain character of Murat, and knowing, besides, that his wishes for the independence of Italy had already been counteracted by the

allies. I was at Eugene's headquarters, when Faypoult, formerly a prefect, a man in whom Murat placed some confidence, arrived. He had been sent by Napoleon to Murat, as well as to Eugene, with the intelligence of the recent successes he had obtained at Briey and at Montereau. These advantages were purposely exaggerated, for the double object of keeping up Eugene's hopes, and damping Murat's zeal in the cause of his new allies. Count Tacher, one of Eugene's aides-de-camps, whom he had despatched to Napoleon, had returned also with the utmost expedition, and reported to him the very words which the emperor, intoxicated with some brilliant but transient success, had addressed to him: "Return to Eugene," said Napoleon, "tell him how I have trimmed these scoundrels; they are a set of rabble whom I will whip out of my dominions." The most general joy prevailed at headquarters. I took Eugene aside, and told him that such bombast ought to inspire with confidence only such as were mad enthusiasts, but that they could have no effect upon reasonable people; that these latter saw, in its full extent, the imminent danger which threatened the imperial throne; that arms were not wanting to defend the government, but rather the sentiments to set them in action; and that by separating himself from the nation, the emperor, by his despotism, had destroyed all public spirit. I gave Eugene some advice, and began my journey to Lyons, leaving Italy a prey, so to speak, to four different armies, the French, Austrian, Neapolitan, and English; for this time Lord Bentinck had really landed at Leghorn: from that place, having signified to Eliza, that he acknowledged neither the authority of Napoleon, nor hers, as grand duchess, and in this manner dictating the law to Tuscany, he formed a junction with the Neapolitans who occupied Bologna, Modena, and Reggio. Thus I left Italy in a most uncertain and embarrassed situation; nothing could be then more precarious than our possessions beyond the Alps. Neither the viceroy, nor Murat, and certainly

neither of them were deficient in valour, had sufficient political talents, nor even consistency enough in the eyes of the Italians to prescribe the wrecks of our power in Italy, especially as both proceeded in opposite directions.

To own the truth, I was much more uneasy about the alarming condition of France, than about the tottering situation of the viceroy, and even of Murat; in fact, the fate of Italy was about to depend on the result of the contest, then proceeding in so vigorous a manner, between Napoleon and the allied monarchs, who endeavoured to establish themselves between the Seine and the Marne.

It was in the midst of these circumstances that I entered Lyons, towards the beginning of March. Everything there was in a state of confusion and uncertainty, as to the result of the campaign. The prefect, the commissary-general of police, and some subordinate generals, were inclined to defend Lyons, as a consequence of the universal persuasion that Paris would also be defended; and it was by throwing up earthen outworks that they thought they could arrest the enemy's progress before the second city of the empire, which was threatened by the arrival of a reinforcement of 45,000 Germans. Augereau was gained; he who depreciated Napoleon, but who possessed little skill as a politician, and who, in this crisis, yielding to evil counsels, could discover no benefit for France, except by identifying her with his destiny. A line of fortifications was hastily traced, and all kinds of means employed to impart a national character to this popular resistance. But the same inclinations, which then were beginning to disclose themselves at Paris, the seat of government, prevailed also at Lyons. The prefect Bondy did his utmost to animate the patriotism of the lethargic Lyonnese, which was extinguished by the same causes which caused it to languish in other parts of France.

The very night of my arrival, I was admitted to a conference with the chief public functionaries, which took place every evening at the house of Marshal Augereau. I

perceived, from the first moment, that all desperate measures were acceded to by no one but the prefect, a few of the general officers, who had arrived with a corps from the army of Arragon, and Saulnier, commissary-general of police. I announced, without disguise, the defection of the King of Naples, and that a million of men were about to rush into France, which it was no longer possible to save, except by some master-stroke of policy. I saw that my opinions as well as my disclosures were in opposition to the functionaries, who, carried away by their zeal for the emperor, did not shrink from the horrors of a siege. They did not disguise the mortification which my presence gave them, and I soon perceived that they had received secret instructions about me. Augereau, having refused to listen to the only prospect of deliverancé which was in harmony with the interests of the revolution, of which, nevertheless, he was a zealous partisan, concluded by acceding to the measure proposed by the prefect and commissary-general of police, the object of which was to compel me to quit Lyons, and to reside, provisionally, at Valence. I yielded, though with reluctance, and took the road to Dauphiné ; casting, at the same time, a longing look on that of Paris, which was the only one whereon I could have wished to have travelled post.

It was at Valence that I learnt the arrival of MONSIEUR, Count d'Artois, at Vesoul, and the terrors of Napoleon at the first daybreak of royalism which had just burst forth at Troyes, in Champagne. I learnt, a few days after, and in succession, the arrival of the Duke d'Angoulême at the headquarters of Lord Wellington ; the loss of the battle of Orthez by Soult ; the loss of the battle of Laon by Napoleon ; and the entry of the Duke d'Angoulême into Bordeaux. How much deeper my regret then became, to behold myself more than a hundred leagues from the capital, where a political revolution was of necessity to be expected as a consequence of so many disasters. The

occupation of Lyons by the Austrians almost immediately followed; and Marshal Augereau withdrawing his head-quarters to Valence, I departed for Avignon, in order to wait the issue of events, and in full readiness to hurry to Paris at the first signal. But surrounded by different *corps d'armée*, reduced to the uncertainty of conjectures, and to depend upon vague rumours, by the interruption of the couriers and by the difficulty of communication, I doubtless hesitated too long in taking the decisive step. How much I subsequently repented of not having clandestinely proceeded to Paris, through the centre of France, which was at that time free from foreign invasion! One single consideration was calculated to dissuade me; I had reason to fear that secret instructions, referring to me, were transmitted to each prefect individually.

I was residing at Avignon, without any political character, and I inhabited the same apartment in which the unfortunate Brune was assassinated a year afterwards. There I found the public mind so greatly opposed to Napoleon, that I had it publicly announced that I would receive all the public bodies and constituted authorities, to whom I announced the approaching downfall of the imperial government, adding that Murat, in Upper Italy, was labouring for the good cause. In a greater extent than at Lyons and Valence, an inclination to see the fall of Napoleon followed by some kind of authority was manifested at Avignon. At length, the news of the events of the 31st of March reached me. Compelled to make a long circuit, in order to follow the road of Toulouse and Limoges, I did not arrive at Paris till towards the beginning of April; but it was already too late. The establishment of a provisional government, of which I ought to have constituted a part; the deposition of Napoleon, which I was ambitious to pronounce, but which was effected without my aid; in short, the restoration of the Bourbons, which I would have opposed, in order to substitute my plan of a regency—annihilated all my projects, and

replunged me into a state of political nullity, in the presence of princes to whom I had given matter of offence. I was aware that clemency might be in harmony with the goodness of their hearts, but I was also aware that it was not less incompatible with the principle of legitimacy.

I subsequently heard this double question agitated:—If the Duke of Otranto had been at Paris, would he have formed a part of the provisional government; and, if he had done so, what would have been the result of the revolution of the 31st of March?

I owe in this place some elucidations to my contemporaries, relative to secret circumstances which I have not judged fitting to parcel out in my narrative, in order to exhibit them to the light in a better form; for there are some confessions which are only to be justified by conjunctures, and which ought not to be hazarded, except when circumstances justify them. I will admit, in the first instance, that impressed with the necessity of preventing a European re-action, and of saving France by the assistance of France, the events of 1809—that is to say, the war with Austria and the attack of the English on Antwerp—were only the first steps towards the execution of a plan of revolution, the object of which was the dethronement of the emperor. I confess, moreover, that I was the moving soul of this plan, which was alone capable of reconciling us with Europe, and of bringing us back to a reasonable state of government. It required the concurrence of two statesmen, one directing the cabinet of Vienna, and the other that of St. James's, I mean Prince Metternich and the Marquess of Wellesley, to whom I had sent for that purpose M. de Fagan, an old officer in the Irish regiment of Dillon, and whose insinuating character was adapted for so delicate a mission.

Before proceeding to overtures of this description, I had not neglected, in the interior of France, to reconcile myself with the only man whose co-operation was indispensable to

me. It will be easily guessed that I allude to Prince Talleyrand. Our reconciliation had taken place in a conference at Surêne, at the house of the Princess of Vaudémont. From the first moment of interview, our political ideas sympathized; and a kind of coincidence was established between our future plans. I had not, however, been able to escape from the epigrammatic mordacity of my noble and new ally, who, being questioned by his intimate friends, after our interview, as to what his opinion was with regard to me, replied :—" *Oui, oui, j'ai vu, Fouché; c'est du papier doré sur tranche.*"

The observation was of course brought to me; I did not show that I was offended at it; political considerations, in my case, have always superseded the irritability of wounded self-love.

I had been equally aware of the necessity of placing myself in direct communication with one of the most influential of the senators, M. de S——, who was himself in close connection with the secretaryship of state, by means of Maret, an old fellow-prisoner.

An acquisition of this description was so much the more valuable to me, as, since the disgrace of Bourienne, I had no one in my interest in the secretary's office, but inferior agents, who often suffered the thread of the higher class of intrigues to escape from their grasp. But how was I to obtain the confidence of a person, whom I had reckoned for a considerable time among the number of my declared antagonists. The senatorship of Bourges had just become vacant; that I resolved should be the price of our reconciliation; I manœuvred in consequence; S—— obtained it; and from that moment I gained a friend in the senate, and, as it were, an additional eye for ever on the watch in the cabinet of Napoleon.

But another individual was still wanting for my plans; Marshal M——, chief of the *gendarmerie*. Up to that time he had been opposed to me. Appointed to the command of

a *corps d'armée* in Catalonia, he was unprovided, although in the highest offices, with the necessary funds for his outfit. I knew his embarrassment, and sent him, by the advice of a friend, eighty thousand francs, which I had in reserve, and which it was in my power to dispose of, having obtained the emperor's sanction. In this manner, in the space of a very few months, I made friends of all enemies. I had two ministries on my hands ; the home department and that of the police. I had the *gendarmerie* at my disposal, and a multitude of spies at my command ; as a lever of public opinion, I had also the immense patronage of the old republicans, as well as of the determined royalists, who found protection in my power. Such were the elements of that power, when Napoleon, engaged in the double war of Spain and Austria, and thenceforth considered as an incorrigible disturber, appeared to me to be involved in so inextricable a position, that I concerted the plan which I have disclosed in a preceding passage. Whether it was that Napoleon's sagacity divined what I was about, or that indiscretion inherent in the native character of Frenchmen had awakened his suspicions (for as to being betrayed, I certainly was not), my disgrace, which was almost sudden, as I have related at the end of the events of 1809, postponed for five years the subversion of the imperial throne. And it was under the protection of feelings such as these, and under the support of a body of public opinion, which had never abandoned me either at the time of my disgrace or of my exile ; it was, moreover, while fortified by the reputation of a statesman, who, with the precision of cool and calculating foresight, had prophesied the fall of Napoleon, that I found myself overtaken by the events of the 31st of March. If I had been at Paris at that time, the weight of my influence, and my perfect knowledge of the secret bearings of parties, would have enabled me to impart an entirely contrary direction to the bias of those extraordinary events. My preponderance and prompt decision would have

prevailed over the more mysterious and tardy influence of M. de Talleyrand. That distinguished individual was incapable of making any progress, unless when yoked with me to the same car. I should have revealed to him all the ramifications of my political plan ; and in spite of the odious policy of Savary, the ridiculous administration of Cambacérès, the lieutenant-generalship of the puppet Joseph, and the total prostration of the senate, we should have rekindled fresh life in the *caput mortuum* of the revolution ; and degraded patriots would have no longer thought, as they have done when it was too late, of preserving nothing but themselves. Impelled by me, they would, before the intervention of foreign powers, have pronounced the downfall of Napoleon, and proclaimed a regency, according to the forms which I had laid down. This *dénouement* was the only one capable of imparting security to the revolution and its principles. But the fates had otherwise decreed.[1] Napoleon himself conspired against his own blood. What shifts, what pretexts, did he not employ to keep me at a distance from the capital, where he even feared the presence of his son and of his wife ; for the order which he left to Cambacérès, to cause the immediate departure of the empress and the King of Rome, at the earliest appearance of the allies, cannot, without great misrepresentation, be imputed to any other motive, than that of averting such a revolution as might be effected by the establishment of a national regency. After having suffered himself to be juggled out of his capital by the Emperor Alexander, he wished to have recourse to the regency as a last shift. But it was then too late. The combinations of M. de Talleyrand had prevailed, and it was when

[1] Rather say, that in spite of so many intrigues of all the military power of Bonaparte, and of the protracted aberrations of European policy, Providence at length determined that our native princes should resume the sceptre of France. We were at length consoled for so many wars and calamities, by the reign of Charles X., which the wise foresight of Louis XVIII. enabled him to prepare for our advantage.—*Note by the French Editor.*

a provisional government was already framed, that I arrived, to make my appearance before the restoration. What a position, just Heaven, was mine! Impelled by the consciousness of the many claims which I possessed to power, and withheld by a sentiment of remorse; impressed at the same time with the grandeur of a spectacle perfectly new to the generation which witnessed it—the public entrance of a son of France, who, after being the sport of fortune for twenty-five years, reviewed, in the midst of acclamations and universal rejoicing, the capital of his ancestors adorned with the standards and emblems of royalty. Moved, I confess, by the affecting picture of royal affability, intermingling with royalist intoxication, I was subjugated by the feeling.[1] I neither dissembled my regret nor my repentance: I revealed them in full senate, while I urged the senators to send a deputation to S. A. R. Monsieur; at the same time declaring myself unworthy to form a part of it, and of appearing in my own person before the representative of monarchy; and withstanding to the utmost of my influence such of my colleagues, as wished to impose restraints upon the Bourbons.

A month had not yet elapsed when, tormented by the secret disquietude with which the residence of Napoleon at the Isle of Elba inspired me, a residence which I foresaw might prove fatal to France, I took up my pen, and addressed him in the following letter, which I surrender to the impartial judgment of history:—

"SIRE,—When France and a portion of Europe were at your feet, I never flinched from telling you the truth. Now that you are in misfortune, I entertain more fear of wound-

[1] Another effect of the same providence. What a sublime and affecting spectacle was that return of a son of France on the immortal day of the 12th of April, 1814. That spectacle affected the soul of a regicide; the feeling of remorse overcomes him; he recognizes, in the great catastrophe, the hand of Divine Providence, which prepared, ten years before, the way for the mild and paternal rule of Charles X., of that chivalrous king, who was saluted by the acclamations of the Parisians on the very threshold of our restoration.—*Note by the French Editor.*

ing your sensibility while I address you in the language of sincerity; but it is a duty which I owe to you, because it is useful, and even necessary to your own welfare.

"You have accepted the Isle of Elba and its sovereignty for your retreat. I lend an attentive ear to all which is dropped on the subject of that sovereignty and of that isle. I think it is my duty to assure you, that the situation of that isle, in Europe, is not adapted for you, and that the title of sovereign of a few acres of land is still less fitted for him, who has been the master of an immense empire.

"I entreat you to weigh well these two considerations, and you will perceive that they are well founded.

"The Isle of Elba is at a very short distance from Africa, Greece, and Spain; it nearly touches the shores of Italy and France. From that island, tides, winds, and a little felucca may suddenly bring you in those countries most exposed to agitation, to chances, and revolutions. There is as yet stability nowhere; and, in this general condition of national instability, a genius like yours may always excite disquietude and suspicion among European powers. Without being criminal you may be accused, and without being criminal you may also do mischief, since a state of alarm is a great evil for governments as well as for nations.

"A king who ascends the throne of France must desire to reign exclusively by justice; but you know well what numerous passions besiege a throne, and with what ingenuity malice gives the colour of truth to defamation.

"The titles which you preserve, by constantly recalling what you have lost to your mind, can only serve to aggravate the bitterness of your regret; they will not appear the wrecks but a vain imagery of passed grandeur. I will go farther; without doing you honour, they will expose you to the greatest danger. It will be said that you preserve your titles, only because you retain your pretensions; it will be said that the rocky island of Elba is the *point d'appui* on

which you will fix your lever, in order, a second time, to shake the whole world.

"Permit me, Sire, to express with frankness all that passes in my mind. It would be more glorious and more consolatory for you to live in the character of a private individual; and the more secure asylum for a man like yourself is the United States of America. There you will recommence your existence in the midst of a nation still in its youth, and which can admire your genius without standing in dread of its effects. You will be under the protection of laws, equally impartial and inviolable, like everything else in the country of Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson. You will prove to the Americans that, if you had been born among them, you would have thought and voted as they had done, and that you would have preferred their virtues and their liberty to all the sovereignties on earth."

This letter, which I am disposed to consider as creditable to my character, was subsequently submitted, by the royalists, to Monsieur Comte d'Artois, in conjunction with the following letter, which I addressed to his royal highness:—

"MONSEIGNEUR,—It has been my wish to offer a last service to the Emperor Napoleon, whose minister I was for ten years. I think it my duty to communicate to your royal highness the letter which I have just written. His welfare cannot be a matter of indifference to me, since it has excited the generous pity of the powers which have conquered him. But the greatest of all interests for France and Europe, that to which all others ought to give way, is the tranquillity of nations and governments after so many storms and misfortunes; and that repose, even though established upon solid bases, will never be sufficiently guaranteed, will never, in short, be permanently enjoyed, as long as the Emperor Napoleon remains in the Isle of Elba. Napoleon, residing on that rock, may be regarded, with respect to Italy, France, and the whole of Europe, with the same feelings as Vesuvius

by the side of Naples. I see no place but the New World and the United States which he will never shake."

The prince, whose sagacity is certainly unquestionable, was enabled by this letter to judge, what he but imperfectly knew before, that I was not to be reckoned among the adherents of Napoleon.

On being consulted by ministers and courtiers, I frequently repeated to them, "Be silent on all wrongs; place yourself at the head of the good which has been done for the last twenty-five years; reject all the evil on preceding governments, or, more justly, to the force of events; profit by the virtue which oppression has engendered, the energy which our discords have developed, and the talents which popular ferment has struck out. If the king do not make the nation his *point d'appui*, his authority will diminish, his courtiers will be reduced to the necessity of extorting barren tributes of homage on his behalf, which will be his ruin. "Take care," I added, "not to touch upon the colour of the national cockade and flag; that question is not yet entirely understood; it is frivolous only in appearance, but it will decide on everything; the question is, as it were, to decide under which standard the nation will rally; the colour of the riband may, also, decide the colour of the reign. A sacrifice like this, on the part of the king, resembles that made by Henry IV., with regard to the mass." It may be seen from this, that, in my advice, I did not hesitate to constitute the king into a head of the revolution, to which, by this measure, a guarantee, much stronger than that of the charter itself, would be presented; my opinions, and the interests of my country, as well as my own, prescribed this course. But if, on the one hand, I possessed numerous partisans, either among the royalists, or among the men of the revolution; I had, on the other hand, against me the Bonapartists, and the relics of Savary's police. The latter represented me as devoured by chagrin, at not having been able to assist in the overthrow of an edifice which I had

taken pleasure in erecting ; and as hurrying to the legitimate throne, making a parade of my remorse, and offering my services to the august family, which I had outraged, at any price which they chose to fix. The former, on the contrary, depicted me as the only man calculated to maintain the security of the Bourbons ; as a most sagacious minister, capable of disposing of a portion of the elements of the political body. I do not think that I deceive myself, when I affirm that such was the prevailing opinion in the Faubourg St. Germain.

I commenced a correspondence with several important personages of the court ; among others, with my friend Malouet, who, since his exile at Tours, had been appointed by the king to the department of the navy. All the letters which I wrote to him were placed under the king's eye. I recommended to him, as well as to all those who came on his majesty's behalf to ask my advice, not to establish a warfare between old and new opinions, between the nation and the emigrants ; but there was not energy enough to follow any part of my recommendation ; and the torrent of opposite opinions was suffered to prevail.

Towards the end of June, the king having desired M. de Blacas to have a conference with me, I had a visit from that minister, whom I coldly received. I knew him to be surrounded by persons who were my enemies, and who enjoyed no credit with the public ; such as Savary, Bourienne, the old prefect of police Dubois, and a certain Madame P——, a woman in bad repute, and very notorious ; I knew that the whole of them, united, exerted themselves to delude and circumvent M. de Blacas. His unconciliating manner, and his inexperience in business, joined to the aversion with which his cabal inspired me, prevented him from fully comprehending me, while it precluded me from speaking openly to him. However, as Louis XVIII. would be informed that I had shown reserve and want of confidence in my communications with his minister, I took up my pen,

and, the next day, wrote a detailed letter to M. de Blacas, under the conviction that the king would be shortly made acquainted with it. I said that the agitation of France was caused among the people by a dread of the re-establishment of feudal rights; by disquietude respecting their acquisitions, on the part of the possessors of emigrant property; by a doubt as to their personal security on the part of those who had firmly declared themselves either for the republic or for Bonaparte; by the loss of, and regret for, so many prospects of glory and fortune, on the part of the army; and, finally, by the astonishment produced on the publication of the charter (which the king had chosen to characterize as an emanation from his hereditary power) on the minds of the constitutionalists. Among these causes, the most dangerous of all was precisely that, the action of which all the wisdom of the king and of his ministers could not entirely foresee nor prevent: I mean the discontent of the army, and I explained its motives; among others, I stated that an army, and more especially an army raised by conscription, always imbibes the general feeling of the nation in which it lives, and that it always ends with being either contented or discontented, like the nation, and in conjunction with the nation. With this cause of discontent, I added, that the genius of Bonaparte still interfered. "A nation," I observed, "in which, for five-and-twenty years, opinions and feelings have been thrown into so strong an action as to shake the universe, cannot, without long gradations of interval, return to a tranquil and peaceable condition; to attempt to stop the force of that activity would be impolitic; new fuel must be found for its rapacity; the boundless careers of industry in all the branches of commerce, of the arts, of the sciences, and of the discoveries which they may effect, must be thrown open and enlarged as much as possible; in short, everything which extends the faculties and the power of man. The nineteenth century has scarcely begun; it ought to bear the name of Louis XVIII., as the seventeenth bore

the name of Louis XIV." I equally pleaded the cause of the liberty of the press and individual liberty; and I concluded in the following terms:—"Great numbers of Frenchmen, who devoted themselves to participate in the misfortunes of the Bourbons, as they had in their prosperity, have returned with the dynasty of their kings; they can no longer pretend to the re-acquisition of their estates, without exciting violent troubles and a civil war;—then let one of the king's ministers, with the logic of a reflecting mind, and imbued with the eloquence of a soul alive to what is due to great misfortunes and great virtues, ask of the two chambers the allotment of an annual sum for the purpose of indemnifying calamities and privations so deserving of succour, at the hands of a feeling and heroic nation; I will take upon myself to answer, that such a project in the chambers would be passed into a law by acclamation."

But such advice could only be fruitless, as long as it came from an individual out of the sphere of power. Supported and urged by a numerous party of royalists, the ramifications of which extended as far as the court, I confess that I was led to hope that I might again come into office as minister, for the purpose of exerting an influence over events; but I had opposed to me M. de Blacas, who had subjected himself to the crafty influence of Savary; and the latter, being sold to Bonaparte, trembled at the idea of a door of access to the king's councils being opened to me. I had, moreover, too many recollections, interests, and especially rival pretensions, to struggle with. I did not disguise from myself, that the main argument which was constantly reiterated against me was undeniable. I felt my real position, and departed with my family for my château of Ferrières, whence I proposed to cast an observing eye upon events. It was necessary to oppose the wishes of my friend, in order to station myself, in this manner, at a distance from the capital.

I was convinced, beforehand, that the feeble and incompetent individuals who held the helm of government

would continue to follow erroneous maxims in politics, and to impart a false direction to affairs.

What serious reflections, therefore, assailed my mind, with regard to the equivocal and inconsistent position of the new government! As a statesman, it could not escape my notice, that a restoration had been effected without a revolution; since all the springs of the imperial government still subsisted, and nothing was changed, if I may so express it, but the *individuality* of power. And, in fact, what could be found, after the lapse of twenty years, in an immovable condition? Clergy, nobility, institutions, municipalities, hereditary property, nothing had escaped the general overthrow. The Bourbons, in reascending the throne, found support in public inclination, but not in national interest. Such was the origin and first cause of the commotion, the first indications of which already began to exhibit themselves to my eyes. France was participated between the votaries and adversaries of the restoration. Louis XVIII. reigned over a suffering and divided nation; all who had shared in the deeds of imperial despotism, all the individuals who had distinguished themselves in our revolutionary crisis, feared to be obliged to share their dignities with the ancient nobility; they had required securities, and they had obtained them, or imagined they had obtained them, by that declaration claimed from the king, and promulgated by that prince before his entrance into his capital.

But, on the other hand, the reverses of Napoleon had succeeded each other with so much rapidity, that the possessors of high offices and great incomes had not had sufficient time to retrench the luxury of their establishments. When the Bourbons were recalled, some calculation was necessary on their part, and it was indispensable to put a sudden stop to the unlimited course of their expenses. Here was a plentiful source of discontent and irritation among the upper ranks of the social order. Another still more alarming cause of instability for the new government,

was to be found in the army, as yet intact, it had not yet been disbanded (an enormous error), for all the old soldiers, and all the prisoners, who were restored to France, were imbued with a spirit at variance with the restoration, and devoted to the interests of the ex-emperor.

The king, instead of accepting the charter, had granted it; another subject of discontent to that great body of Frenchmen, whose political era dated from the revolution. The charter, it is true, confirmed titles, honours, and in some respects, places; it legalized the acquisition of national property; but that was not entirely satisfactory for so many restless and prejudiced individuals. The charter, moreover, had a multitude of objectors. According to one party, it was not sufficiently liberal; according to the partisans of the ancient *régime*, the old constitution of the kingdom was preferable. To this state of things must be added the laxity and uncertainty of the ministers, who, without being either royalists or patriots, took it into their heads that they could render France ministerial. The general apprehension must also be borne in mind, which was entertained of the congress of Vienna, which, while employed in the reconstruction of Europe, menaced such states as had become the seat of revolution with subjection to an anti-revolutionary *régime;* in this manner the interests produced by twenty-five years of troubles were thrown into alarm. The royalists enfeebled, became divided, in proportion as their adversaries, shuddering at the very name of the Bourbons, exhibited more pertinacity in disputing their rights. The possibility of Napoleon's return, considered at first as a chimera, became the favourite idea of the army; plots were formed, and the royal police countermined. It is easy to conceive, that having occupied so many elevated posts in the state, and still preserving such numerous links of connection with public affairs, and with so devoted a body of clients in the capital, my observations extended over all the intrigues which were preparing.

I was in this disposition of mind, when an individual, who had possessed much influence and who was then losing it daily, wrote to prevail upon me to make one of a secret committee, the object of which was a change of government. I wrote upon the very note of invitation the following answer, which afterwards was made known : "I do not work in secrecy (*en cherres chaudes*) ; I will not do anything that may not appear in open air (*au grand air*)."

In the meantime affiliations were forming ; and influential men were contracting political engagements to each other. It was soon obvious to me, that the state was proceeding towards a crisis, and that the adherents of Napoleon had coalesced in order to accelerate its advent. But no success was possible without my co-operation ; I was everything but decided to concede it to a party, against whom I entertained a grudge of long standing. Repeated applications were made to me, and many plans suggested ; all tended to the dethronement of the king, and the subsequent proclamation either of another dynasty or of a provisional republic. A military party made me a proposal of offering the dictatorship to Eugene Beauharnais. I wrote to Eugene, under the impression that the matter had already assumed a substantial form ; but I only received a vague answer. In the interim, all the interests of the revolution congregated round myself and Carnot, whose letter to the king produced a general sensation, which attested still more efficaciously against the unskilfulness of the ministry. The affair of Excelmans gave additional strength to the persuasion that a considerable party, the focus of which was in Paris, desired the re-establishment of Napoleon and the imperial government.

When, as winter approached, I returned to the capital, the royal government appeared to me undermined by two parties, hostile to legitimacy, and itself thenceforward without resource. The king had, in his wisdom, commissioned the Duke d'Havré to supersede M. de Blacas in his confidential communications with me. The true nobility of this

nobleman's character, as well as his frank deportment, gained him my entire confidence ; I opened my whole heart to him, and found myself disposed to a freedom of communication which I had never before known. Never had I, in any moment of my life, felt so little inclination to reserve ; never before did I find myself endowed with an eloquence so true, and a sensibility so intense, as those which accompanied the recital of the circumstances by which I had been fatally induced to vote for the death of Louis XVI. I can say it with truth, that this confession extorted from my feelings was imbued at once with remorse and inspiration. I cannot, indeed, at this time, recall to mind, without profound emotion, the tears which I observed in the eyes of my virtuous interlocutor—of that illustrious duke, who was a personification of true and loyal French chivalry.

Our political conversations were minuted, for the purpose of being subsequently communicated to the king. But the wounds of the state were beyond remedy, and a great crisis was inevitable. Placed, on the one hand, between the Bourbons, who only conceded to me a demi-confidence, whose system closed all the avenues of power and honour against me, and with regard to whom I was in a false position, while, at the same time, I had no kind of engagement towards them ; and on the other hand, between the party to which I was indebted for my fortune, and to which a community of opinions and interests attracted me, at the moment when a prolonged state of doubt on my part might have isolated me from both, I threw myself entirely into the arms of the last. It was not against the Bourbons that I resolved within myself to wage war, but against the dogma of legitimacy. I was, however, thwarted in my combinations by the existence of a Bonapartist party, which exerting all its influence over the army, kept us all in a state of dependence. It was my ancient colleague Thibaudeau who first disclosed to me the progress of the faction in the Isle of

Elba, whose principal agent he was. I saw that there was no time to lose; I, moreover, considered that Napoleon would, at all events, serve as a rallying point for the army, which we might the more easily overthrow afterwards, as the emperor, in my eyes, was nothing but a worn-out actor, whose first performance could not be re-enacted. I then consented that Thibaudeau should make overtures to some of Napoleon's friends, and I allowed Regnault, Cambacérès, Davoust, S——, B——, L——, C——, B—— de la M——, and M. de D—— to be admitted to our conferences. But I demanded concessions and securities, refusing to unite with that party, if their chief, abjuring despotism, did not adopt a system of liberal government. Our coalition was cemented by the reciprocal promise of an equal participation of power, either in the ministry or in the provisional government, at the moment of the explosion. According to the plan arranged with Thibaudeau, I hastened to despatch my emissary, J——, to Murat, to induce him to declare himself the arbiter of Italy; at the same time the great committee despatched Doctor R—— to the Isle of Elba. Lyons and Grenoble became the two pivots of the enterprise in the south; in the north, a military movement directed by d'Erlon and Lefebvre-Desnouettes was to determine the flight or capture of the royal family, which measure would require the formation of a provisional government, of which I was to form a part with Carnot, Caulaincourt, Lafayette, and N——. To resume the supreme power in the midst of the general confusion, such was the drift of our combinations. Impatient to reconcile himself with Napoleon, and hoping to remain master of Italy, Murat, although the ally of Austria, was the first to take up arms on some insidious pretences; this show of hostilities apparently directed against Louis XVIII., caused great sensation in the king's council. Thirty thousand men were immediately marched towards Grenoble and the Alps, or rather thrown in Napoleon's way. The adroitness of this manœuvre was

not discovered. In the meanwhile the disembarkation of the emperor took place at Cannes; and it may be alleged in proof that we are not a nation of conspirators, that for the preceding fortnight the overthrow of the Bourbons had been publicly avowed by all parties, and had been a subject of universal conversation. The court alone persevered in refusing to see what was evident to everybody else.

Before touching on the events of the 20th of March, let us throw a retrospective glance. It will have been seen that I had, at first, no intention of joining the rebellious party; my only aim was to induce the cabinet of the Tuileries to seize the reins of the revolution, and hold them with a vigorous hand through the midst of surrounding obstacles. I think I may avow, without arrogating too much to myself, that I alone was capable of heading and superintending such a system; at the court, in Paris, and in the provinces, I was selected by all parties as fittest for this bold attempt. I had to contend against rivals, to whom the past appeared to furnish with invincible arms; but, up to the latest moment, I never ceased seeking for some *mezzo-termine*, some mode of conciliation, which might do away with the necessity of recurring to the desperate expedient of the emperor's return. It has been seen, how in yielding to it I yielded to the necessity of the case. It was only at the moment of Napoleon's landing, that I was thoroughly informed of the fatal combination which brought him back to our shores. Its object embraced three distinct sub-divisions: the return of Napoleon to Paris; the captivity of the king and the royal family; and the evasion of Maria-Louisa and her son from Vienna. The first part of the plan was that, the execution of which was the easiest, considering the disposition to defection manifested by almost all the troops. The same could not be said of the seizure of the king and the royal family; for that purpose it would have been necessary for an army to have suddenly marched on the capital, an expedient which precluded the possibility of a secret; and it was on that account

that the attempt of Lefebvre-Desnouettes failed. As to the evasion of Maria-Louisa and her son, that also was attempted and had nearly succeeded. Shrinking with a kind of horror from the idea of sacrificing to a military *coup de main* the family of a monarch who had shown such a high opinion of me as to take my advice, I requested an audience of the king as soon as I learnt that Napoleon was marching upon Lyons. This interview was not granted me; but two gentlemen came, on his majesty's behalf, to receive my communications. I apprized them of the danger which Louis XVIII. incurred, and I engaged to stop the progress of the fugitive from the Isle of Elba, if the court would consent to the terms which I required. My proposals resulted from the actual nature of the events which were in the act of being unfolded. A patriotic party, not less inimical than myself to imperial despotism, had just completed its sudden organization; it had for its chiefs MM. de Broglie, Lafayette, D'Argenson, Flaugergues, Benjamin Constant, &c. They had agreed to require of the king, the dismissal of his ministers; the nomination of forty new members selected from men of the revolution, to the chamber of peers; and that of M. de Lafayette to the command of the National Guard. It was, moreover, proposed to send, into the provinces, patriotic commissioners, in order to stop the defection of the troops and kindle a national energy in their hearts. I was no stranger to the motions of this party, by means of which I was subsequently to become minister. I was, however, aware that it was indispensable to rally all the elements of the revolution, in order to oppose them in one body to the power of the sword; that it was necessary to oppose one name against another, and the charm of those recollections, which the heir of the first mover of the revolution would excite in the hearts of freemen, against that of a glory, which, by its sudden resurrection, dazzled the genius of the camp. When the king's ministers desired to know what

were the means which I proposed to employ in order to prevent Napoleon from reaching Paris, I refused to communicate them, being disinclined to disclose them to any person but the king himself; but I protested that I was sure of success. The two chief conditions which I exacted, was the appointment of the first prince of the blood to the lieutenant-generalship of the kingdom, and the consignment of power and the direction of affairs into my hands and those of my party. This experiment of my political measures was declined, and we therefore found ourselves necessitated, in some sort, to second the impulse of the party which I had wished to paralyse; conceiving myself, besides, in a condition to substitute a more popular government in the room of that which Napoleon threatened to revive.

The alarm in the palace of the Tuileries hourly increasing in proportion as the march of Napoleon became more rapid and more certain, the court again turned its looks towards me. Some royalists interfered to obtain, at least, for me, an interview with *Monsieur*, the king's brother, in the apartments of the Comte d'Escars. I only required permission to go clandestinely to the Tuileries by night; the publicity of such a proceeding being otherwise calculated to compromise my influence with my party. Everything was regulated accordingly. *Monsieur* did not keep me waiting long; he was only attended by the Comte d'Escars. The affability of this prince, his condescending deportment, his polite attentions, in which solicitude for the destinies of France and of his family were depicted, to sum up all, his generous and affecting language touched my heart, and doubled my regret that an interview of so vital an importance had been decided upon too late. I declared, with grief, to this frank and loyal prince, that it was too late, and that it was now impossible to serve the king's cause. It was at the conclusion of an interview which will never be erased from my mind, that subjugated by the charm of so august a confidence, and finding in the painful conviction of my own powerlessness a

sudden inspiration, I exclaimed as I took leave of the prince, "Take measures to save the king, and I take upon me to save the monarchy."

Who could have imagined, that, after communications of so great an importance, there should almost immediately be set on foot against me, and against my liberty, a kind of plot, for plot it was, and a plot totally at variance with the genuine sentiments of the magnanimous sovereign and his noble brother. Its authors I will reveal. But, however it may be, I was without the least suspicion, in my own house, when some agents of the Parisian police, at the head of which Bourienne had just been placed, suddenly made their appearance, accompanied by *gendarmes* to arrest me. Having timely intelligence, I hastily took measures for my escape. The agents of police were already proceeding to an active search in my apartments, when the *gendarmes* commissioned to execute the order of the new prefect presented themselves before me. These men, who had so long obeyed my orders, not daring to lay their hands on my person, contented themselves with presenting me the written warrant. I took the paper, opened it, and pretending to read it, said, "This order is not regular; stay a moment while I write my protest against it." I entered my closet, seated myself at my desk, and began to write. I then rose with a paper in my hand, and making a sudden turn, I precipitately descended into my garden by a secret door; there I found a ladder resting against a wall contiguous to the mansion of Queen Hortense. I lightly climbed it; one of my people raised the ladder, which I took and let fall on its feet on the other side of the wall; this I quickly scaled, and descended with still more promptitude. I arrived, in the character of a fugitive, at the house of Hortense, who received me with open arms; and, as in a wonderful Arabian tale, I suddenly found myself in the midst of the *élite* of the Bonapartists, in the head-quarters of the party, where I found mirth, and where my presence caused intoxication.

This *impromptu* circumstance completed the dissipation of that mistrust which the party entertained towards me; and the same individuals who, till then, had considered me in the light of an almost acquired partisan to the Bourbons, now beheld in me nothing more than an enemy proscribed by the Bourbons.

Let it be here understood that political considerations had nothing to do with the attempt to arrest me. His royal highness *Monsieur* went so far as to say to some influential members of the lower house, that it was against his knowledge that the attempt had been made to arrest me, and that he would answer for the safety of my person.

This attempt was nothing but the result of an interested contrivance between Savary, Bourienne, and B——; whatever might be the issue of the 20th of March, this triumvirate, or rather the three members of this tripot, had determined to secure to themselves the profits arising from the gambling houses, and they were convinced that it was necessary to sacrifice me, in order that their ambitious cupidity might acquire a kind of guarantee and consistence.

If I had once fallen into their hands, what would they have done with me? It has been said, that their object was to transfer me to Lille; but no! it was not Lille; this I have learnt since; but it was to the castle of Saumur; and there, I repeat my question, what was the lot they intended for me? If I may rely on discoveries that my return to power elicited, one of my enemies (for all the three were not capable of crime) would have caused my assassination, and subsequently imputed my death to the royalists, who would have borne the odium.

Such was my singular position, that the departure of Louis XVIII. and the arrival of Napoleon were requisite to restore me entirely to liberty. Being one of the first to obtain intelligence that the Tuileries were vacant, I learnt, at the same time, that Lavalette had sent an express to Fontainebleau, where Napoleon had just arrived, to apprize

him of the king's departure. Madame Ham——, who had intrigued so much in producing this innovation, was mortified that others should get the start of her, and, despatching an express with orders to overtake the preceding one, obtained by that means the honour of conveying the first intelligence.

Carried onward by his own soldiers and a portion of the populace, Napoleon resumed possession of the Tuileries in the midst of his partisans, who exhibited symptoms of the most clamorous joy. I was not present at first among the other dignitaries of the state, with whom he conversed on the present aspect of affairs. But Napoleon sent for me: "So they wanted to carry you off," he said, as I approached him, "in order to present you from being useful to your country? Well! I now offer you an opportunity of doing her fresh service; the period is difficult, but your courage, as well as mine, is superior to the crisis. Accept once more the office of minister of police." I represented to him that the office of foreign affairs was more the object of my ambition than any other, persuaded as I was that I could, in that quarter, more than elsewhere, do my country effectual service. "No," rejoined he, "take the charge of the police; you have learnt to judge soundly of the state of the public mind; to divine, prepare, and direct the progress of events; you understand the tactics, the resources, and the pretensions of the various parties; the police is your forte." There was no way of receding. I gave him to understand, in all its extent, the dangerous posture of affairs; and, as if he wished to engage me more deeply in his interest, he assured me that Austria and England, in order to balance the preponderance of Russia, secretly favoured his escape and return to France. Without giving credit to this assurance, I accepted the office.

The next day I learnt, through Regnault, who was devoted to me, that Bonaparte, always suspicious and mistrustful with regard to me, would have wished to keep me out of the

circle of government ; but that he had yielded to the solicitations of Bassano, Caulaincourt, and of Regnault himself, and his chief partisans, who in disclosing their engagements with me, impressed upon his mind the importance of strengthening himself by my popularity and the adherence of the party which I directed.

Cambacérès, who foresaw the fatal issue of this new interlude, did not accept, till after much hesitation, the office of minister of justice ; the *porte-feuille* of war was given to Davoust, who was much more attached to his fortune than to Napoleon.

Caulaincourt, in the conviction that no intercourse could be established with foreign powers, at first refused the office for foreign affairs. Napoleon offered it to Molé, who declined having anything to do with it, and refused the home department at the same time. Too much devoted to the emperor to leave him without a minister, Caulaincourt at length acceded. From hand to hand, the home department at length passed into the possession of Carnot, a nomination which was considered as a national guarantee. The navy was given again to the cynical and brutal Decrès ; and the secretaryship of state to Bassano, notorious for the reputation of thinking with Napoleon's thoughts, and seeing with his eyes. Out of deference to public opinion, Savary was omitted ; however, Moncey having refused the *gendarmerie*, it was given to him ; at least, he was so far in his proper place. Champagny and Montalivet, who had appeared invested with the highest employments when Napoleon, almost master of the world, did not stand in so vacillating a position, modestly contented themselves, the one with the superintendence of public buildings, and the other with that of the civil list. Bertrand, equally amiable, insinuating, and zealous, superseded Duroc in the function of grand marshal of the palace. Napoleon restored to their duty about his person almost all the chamberlains, grooms, and masters of the ceremonies, who surrounded him before his abdication ;

but ill-cured of his old unfortunate passion for noblemen of the *ancien régime*, he must have them at any price; he would have thought himself in the midst of a republic if he had not contrived to be environed by the ancient *noblesse*.

Yet, nevertheless, those who had assisted him in crossing the Mediterranean, pretended that he had thought as much of re-establishing the republic or the consulate as the empire. But I knew what to believe on that head; I knew also what trouble I had had among the adherents, in getting them to force him to abandon his oppressive system, and to engage him to give pledges to the liberties of the nation. His decrees from Lyons had not been voluntary; he had there pledged himself to give a national constitution to France. "I return," he then said, "in order to protect and defend the interests which our revolution has engendered. It is my wish to give you an inviolable constitution, which shall be the joint work of the people and myself." By his decrees from Lyons, he had abolished the chamber of peers by a single stroke of his pen, and annihilated the feudal nobility. It was also from Lyons that, in the hope of averting the resentment of foreign powers, he had commissioned his brother Joseph, then in Switzerland, to make known to them, through the intervention of their ministers to the Helvetic confederation, that he was positively determined on no longer troubling the repose of Europe, and on faithfully maintaining the treaty of Paris.

This compulsory disposition, on his part, the mistrust which he met with in the interior of France, as to the sincerity of his secret thoughts, and, I may add, my own repulsive attitude, put a stop to the impulse of a man who was ready to rekindle the flames of war throughout Europe. In fact, on the very night of his arrival at the Tuileries, he commenced a deliberation as to the expediency of renewing the scourge of war by an invasion of Belgium. But a feeling of dislike having exhibited itself among those who surrounded him, he found it necessary to abandon this project;

he succumbed beneath the hand of necessity, although once more armed with his military power. That power, however, since the Lyons decrees, had changed its nature.

By a decree of the 24th of March, suppressing the censorship and the regulation of publications, he consummated what it was agreed to call the imperial restoration. The liberty of the press, so tumultuous in France, and which is, nevertheless, the mother of all other immunities, had been reconquered. I had much contributed to it, even in the presence of its greatest enemy. Napoleon objected to me that the royalists, on one side, would employ it to aid the cause of the Bourbons—and the jacobins, on the other, to render his sentiments and projects suspected. "Sire," I rejoined, "the French require victory, or the nourishment of liberty." I insisted, also, that his decrees should contain no other epithets than that of emperor of the French, inducing him to suppress the *et cætera*, remarked with uneasiness in his proclamations and decrees from Lyons.

But the idea of being indebted to the patriots for his re-installation at the Tuileries was repugnant to him. "Some intriguers," said he to me with bitterness, "wanted to take all the credit to themselves, and turn it to their own advantage. They now lay claim to having prepared my progress to Paris; but I know what to think about it—the people, the soldiers, and the sub-lieutenants, have effected everything; it is to them and them only that I owe the whole." I felt what was meant by these words, and that they were intended as a reproof for my party and myself.

It must be obvious that, with such feelings, it was indispensable for him to make himself certain of a police different from mine. He sent for Réal, whom he had just invested with the office of prefect of police; and after having allured him with fine promises and more substantial gifts, sent him to Savary, in order to devise means of tracing and counteracting my designs—but I was on my guard.

In the meanwhile, he learnt with anxiety that Louis

XVIII. proposed remaining in observation, on the frontiers of Belgium. He had, besides, another cause of vexation; Ney, Lecourbe, and other generals, wished him to purchase their services, and even to make him pay his ransom; he grew indignant at this. The result of the royalist enterprise rather contributed to tranquillize him. He was astonished by the courage which the Duke d'Angoulême exhibited in La Drome, and especially MADAME at Bordeaux. He admired the intrepidity of this heroic princess, whom the desertion of an entire army had not been able to dispirit. I must here do justice to Maret. On being informed that Grouchy had just made the Duke d'Angoulême prisoner, in contempt of the capitulation of Palud, to which the ratification of Napoleon was alone wanting, and which was in fact obtained, but not sent off, Maret concealed the arrest of the prince from Napoleon, transmitted his original orders, and only apprized him of the nullification of the convention, when the obscurity of night rendered all telegraphic communication impossible.

The next day, it was proposed in council to obtain the crown diamonds, which were worth forty millions, in exchange for the Duke d'Angoulême. I recommended the emperor to throw M. de Vitrolles into the bargain, if the restitution could be obtained. "No," said Napoleon, angrily: "he is an intriguer and an agent of Talleyrand; it was he who was despatched to the Emperor Alexander, and who opened the gates of Paris to the allies. This man has been arrested at Toulouse, in the act of conspiring against me; if he had been shot, Lamarque would have done no more than his duty." I, however, represented to him, that if military executions had been resorted to on both sides, France would soon have been covered with blood; that political reasons prescribed a more temporizing system; and that in restoring the Duke d'Angoulême to liberty, some stipulation could be made for M. D. Vitrolles, who was only the avowed agent of the Bourbons. To this he at length

acceded, and I instantly set on foot a negotiation on the subject.

We had many other causes of inquietude. Caulaincourt had just had an interview, at the house of Madame de Souza, with Baron de Vincent, the Austrian minister, whose passport was designedly delayed. The minister did not disguise that it was the resolution of the allied powers to oppose Napoleon's retention of the throne; but he suffered it to be perceived that Napoleon's son did not inspire the same repugnance. It has been seen that it was upon this same basis that I had previously modelled the plan of an edifice, which I now considered myself in better condition to erect.

Napoleon caused the Emperor Alexander and Prince Metternich to be written to by Hortense, and also to the latter by his sister, the Queen of Naples, hoping in this way to deaden the force of the blows which he was not yet prepared to ward off. He at the same time commissioned Eugene, and the Princess Stephanie of Baden, to neglect nothing, in order to detach them from the coalition. Meanwhile, he caused overtures to be made to the cabinet of London by an agent whom I pointed out to him. And, finally, he hoped to ingratiate himself with the English parliament and nation, by a decree abolishing the negro slave trade.

Meanwhile, all our external communications were intercepted by order of the various cabinets. The proceedings of the congress of Vienna were for the Tuileries a subject of expectation and the most painful anxiety. We at length heard, in an unquestionable manner, what the public already knew, the declaration of the congress of Vienna, dated the 13th of March, which pronounced the outlawry of Napoleon. France was from that time alarmed at the evils which were preparing for her; she groaned at the thoughts of being exposed to the horrors of a new invasion, for the sake of a single man. Napoleon affected not to be moved; and told

us in full counsel, "This time, they will find that they have not to deal with the France of 1814; and their success, if they obtain it, will only serve to render the war more sanguinary and obstinate; while, on the other hand, if victory favour me, I may become as formidable as ever. Have I not on my side Belgium, and the provinces on this side the Rhine. With the aid of a proclamation and a tricoloured flag, I will revolutionize them in twenty-four hours."

I was far from allowing myself to be lulled into security by such gasconades as these. The moment I obtained knowledge of the declaration, I did not hesitate to request the king, by means of an agent, on whom I could rely, to permit me to devote myself, when opportunity occurred, to his service. I demanded no other condition in return, but the right of preserving my repose and fortune in my seclusion of Pont Carré. Everything was acceded to, and sanctioned by Lord Wellington, who arrived just then at Ghent from the congress at Vienna; the same kind of convention had already been concluded, as far as I was concerned, between Prince Metternich, Prince de Talleyrand, and the generalissimo of the allies.

It will not be irrelevant to explain, in this place, the cause of that kindness which I met with from the Wellesley family, not only on the part of the Marquis, but also on that of Lord Wellington. It had its origin in the zeal which I manifested at the period of my second ministry, in putting an end to the captivity of a member of that illustrious family, who was detained in France in consequence of the rigorous measures enforced by Napoleon's orders.

The treaty of the 25th of March, by which the great powers engaged again not to lay down their arms while Napoleon was on the throne, was only the natural consequence of the decision of the 13th. All indirect overtures had completely failed. "No peace, no truce, with that man," replied the Emperor Alexander, to Queen Hortense;

"anything but him." Flahaut, who was sent to Vienna, was not allowed to pass Stutgard; and Talleyrand refused to enter the service of Napoleon. Notwithstanding, however, the manner in which his first overtures had failed, he decided on making new applications to the Emperor of Austria. At the same time that he sent the Baron de Stassart to him, he despatched to M. de Talleyrand, MM. de S. L. and de Monteron, well known by their connection with that statesman, and the last being his most intimate and devoted friend. But these attempts of the second order could scarcely produce any effect upon the general course of things.

I daily became an object of greater umbrage to Napoleon, especially as I never let slip any occasion of repressing his despotic inclination, and the revolutionary measures which he promulgated. I was designated by no other name among his partisans, than that of the *minister of Ghent.* I am also going to explain the cause of his new displeasure. M de Blacas, deaf to all advice, having suffered the affair of the 20th of March to ripen, without believing it, and without troubling his head about it, forgot in the hurry and anxiety of his departure, a mass of papers, which might have compromised a great number of respectable individuals. On being informed of this fact, I had been prompted by an instinctive foresight, as early as the 21st of March, to authorize *M. Lainé*, a notary and a colonel of the national guard, to take possession of M. de Blacas' cabinet, arrange all the papers, and burn all those which might have been a cause of inquietude to the persons who had signed them. Savary and Réal having detected me in this operation, the emperor desired me to deliver up those papers, which I presented to him in a bundle. Finding nothing among them but unimportant matters, he did not fail to suspect me of having withdrawn those which he had an interest in seeing.

On the 25th of March, he exiled, by a decree, to the

distance of thirty leagues from Paris, the royalists, the Vendean chiefs, and the royal volunteers and *gardes du corps*. As I was opposed to this general measure, I sent for the principal persons among them, and after having testified the sympathy I felt for their situation, and explained the attempts I had made to prevent their exile, I authorized most of them to remain at Paris.

The vexation which the royalist intrigues gave Napoleon, and the disposition I showed to mitigate everything, induced him to promulgate his famous decree, which is thought to have been prepared at Lyons, though it only saw the light in Paris, by which he ordained the trial and sequestration of the property of MM. de Talleyrand, Raguse, d'Alberg, Montesquieu, Jaucourt, Beurnonville, Lynch, Vitrolles, Alexis de Noailles, Bourienne, Bellard, Laroche-Jacquelein, and Sosthène de Larochefoucauld. Among this list was also found the name of Augereau ; but it was erased, at the entreaty of his wife, and in consideration of his proclamation on the 23rd of March. I expressed myself very openly in the council, on the subject of this new proscription list ; in getting up which, all private deliberation had been eluded. I maintained it was an act of vengeance and despotism, an early infraction of the promises made to the nation, and which would not fail to be followed by public disapprobation. In fact, some echoes of it had already been heard within the palace of the Tuileries.

Meanwhile, England and Austria were on the point of successively adopting an open system of politics, the object of which was to isolate more and more the position of Napoleon. In her *memorandum* of the 25th of April, England declared, " that, by the treaty of the 9th of March, she had not engaged to replace Louis XVIII. on the throne, and that her intention was not to prosecute the war with a view of imposing any government whatever upon France." A similar declaration, on the part of Austria, appeared on the 9th of May following. In the interim, I was very near

finding myself compromised, in a serious manner, with respect to Austria. A secret agent of Prince Metternich having been despatched to me, that individual, in consequence of some imprudence, was suspected, and the emperor ordered Réal to have him arrested. Terror was of course employed to extort confession from him. He declared that he had delivered a letter to me from the prince, and a sign of mutual recognition, which was to be employed by the agent whom I was about to despatch to Bâle, in order to confer with M. Werner, his confidential delegate. The emperor instantly sent for me, as if he wished to transact business with me. His first thought had been to have my papers seized, but that he quickly abandoned, in the persuasion that I was not a man to leave traces of what might compromise me. Not having the slightest intimation that Prince Metternich's envoy had been arrested, I neither exhibited embarrassment nor anxiety. The emperor, inferring from my silence on the subject of this secret correspondence, that I was betraying him, convoked his partisans, told them I was a traitor, that he had proofs of it, and that he would have me shot. A thousand exclamations were immediately raised against it; it was suggested to him that proofs clearer than daylight were indispensable, in order to warrant an act, which would produce the most violent sensation in the public mind. Carnot, seeing that he persevered, told him, "It is in your power to have Fouché shot, but, to-morrow at the same hour your power will have ceased."—"How?" cried the emperor.—"Yes, Sire," returned Carnot; "this is not the time for dissembling: the men of the revolution will only suffer you to reign as long as they have security that you will respect their liberties. If you cause Fouché to be put to death, by martial law, Fouché, whom they consider as their strongest guarantee, you may be assured of it, that to-morrow you will no longer possess any influence over public opinion. If Fouché be really guilty, you must obtain convincing proofs of it, denounce

him subsequently to the nation, and put him on his trial according to form." This advice was approved by every one ; it was decided that steps should be taken to detect the intrigue, and that an agent should be sent to Bâle, in order to obtain the necessary proofs for my conviction. The emperor confided this mission to his secretary Fleury.[1] Supplied with all the necessary signs of recognition, he immediately departed for Bâle, and subsequently opened communications with M. Werner, as if he had been sent by myself.

It may be easily guessed, that the first question he put to him, was about the means on which the allies calculated for the destruction of Napoleon. M. Werner said, that nothing certain was decided on the subject ; that the allies would have wished to have recourse to force only at the last extremity : that they had hoped that I might be able to find some means of delivering France from Bonaparte, without new effusion of blood. Fleury, continuing to act his part, said, " There only remain, then, two methods to pursue ; to dethrone him, or assassinate him."—" To assassinate him ! " exclaimed M. Werner, with indignation ; " never did such an idea present itself to the mind of M. de Metternich and the allies." Fleury, notwithstanding all his artifices and his captious queries, could obtain no other proof against me, except the conviction which M. de Metternich felt, that I hated the emperor, and that this conviction had prompted him to open communications with me.

I had taken so little pains to disguise my opinion in that respect from Prince Metternich, that the preceding year (1814), at a similar epoch, on seeing him at Paris, I reproached him warmly with not having caused Bonaparte to be confined in a fortress, predicting that he would return from Elba to renew his ravages in Europe. Fleury and M. Werner separated, one to return to Vienna, and the other to

[1] Baron Fleury de Chaboulon.—*Note by the French Editor.*

Paris, in order to provide themselves with fresh instructions, and with a promise of meeting at Bâle again in eight days.

But Fleury had scarcely begun his journey to Bâle, when another direct emissary gave me reason to suspect, and enabled me to discover, what was passing: I put the letter of Prince Metternich in my *porte-feuille;* and after having transacted business with the emperor, feigning a sudden recollection: "Ah, Sire," I said to him, with the tone of a man awaking from a long forgetfulness, "how overwhelmed I must be with the state of public affairs. I am positively besieged in my cabinet; and so it is that, for several days, I have forgotten to lay a letter of Prince Metternich under your eye. It is for your majesty to decide, whether I shall send him the agent which he requires. What can be his object? I can scarcely doubt that the allies, in order to avert the calamities of a general war, wish to induce you to abdicate in favour of your son. I am satisfied, that such is the especial desire of M. de Metternich: indeed, I must reiterate that such is mine: I have never concealed it from you; and I am still persuaded that it will be impossible for you to resist the arms of united Europe." I instantly perceived by the play of his physiognomy, that he was suffering an internal struggle between the vexation which my candour occasioned him, and the satisfaction he derived from the explanation of my conduct.

When Fleury returned, the emperor sent him to me to make a confession of the whole proceeding, as if his intention had been to gain my confidence. It was no great difficulty for me to play upon this young man, so full of enthusiasm and activity, who most seriously employed all his poor cunning to conceal from me the second appointment he had made at Bâle. I suffered him to depart; he arrived there post-haste, and had the fatigues of his journey and the heat of his vehement zeal for his pains. Meanwhile, Monteron and Bresson, who came from Vienna, commissioned to bring me confidential communications on behalf

of M. de Metternich and M. de Talleyrand, renewed the feeling of distrust which Napoleon entertained towards me. He sent for them both : questioned them for a considerable time ; and could extract nothing positive from either. Urged by his uneasy feelings, he wanted to place them under *surveillance ;* but he learnt, with much vexation, that Bresson had suddenly departed for England, apparently commissioned by Davoust, to purchase forty thousand muskets proposed to him by a shipowner. He did not fail to suspect a secret intelligence between Davoust and me, and that Bresson was our tool.

Situated as I was, it was incumbent on me to neglect nothing to preserve the favour of the public opinion : I also possessed my vehicles of popularity, in my circulars and anti-royalist reports. I had just established throughout France, lieutenants of police, who were devoted to me ; the choice of secret agents was entirely left to me ; I got hold of the journals, and thus became master of public opinion. But I had soon upon my hands an affair of much greater importance ; the unseasonable insurrection of La Vendée, which disconcerted all my plans. It was of great moment for me to have the royalists on my side, but not to suffer them to meddle with our affairs. In this particular, my views corresponded with the interests of Napoleon. He was apparently much chagrined at this new fermentation of the old leaven. I hastened to make him easy, by assuring him that I would soon put an end to it ; that he had only to give me *carte blanche*, and to place twelve thousand of the old troops at my disposal. In the conviction that I should not sacrifice them to the Bourbons, he left me at full liberty to take my own measures. I easily persuaded some idiots of the royalist party, whose opinions I modelled after my own fashion, that this war of some few fanatics was unseasonable : that the measures which it would suggest would reproduce the reign of terror, and occasion the revolutionary party to be let loose ; that it was absolutely necessary to

obtain an order from the king, to cause this rabble to lay down their arms: that the grand question could not be decided in the interior, but on the frontiers. I immediately despatched off three negotiators, Malartic, Flavigny, and Laberaudière, furnished with instructions and orders to confer with such of the chiefs as the public effervescence had not yet involved in this party; and who would be glad to be supplied with a plea for waiting the course of events. All was soon arranged; the affair was brought to a conclusion, after a few skirmishes, and, at the decisive moment, La Vendée was both repressed and composed.

The commencement of war by Murat caused me another description of uneasiness, and so much the more serious, as neither the emperor nor myself were possessed of efficacious means of supporting or directing him. Unfortunately, the impulse came from us, for it was absolutely necessary that some one should *bell the cat.* But that individual, who always overstepped moderation, was not able to stop in proper time; I wrote to him in vain at a later period, as well as to the queen, begging him to be moderate, and not to urge events too violently, which we should, probably, too soon be obliged to obey. When I learnt that his troops were already engaged with the troops of Austria, I said to myself "That man is lost; the contest is not equal." The issue was, that he was struck by the storm he had excited.

Towards the end of May, he disembarked, as a fugitive, in the gulf of Juan. This news had all the sinister effect of a fatal omen, and threw the partisans of the emperor in consternation.

On the other hand, Napoleon found himself involved in a labyrinth of affairs, more and more serious, and in the midst of which, all his feelings were absorbed in the sole idea of facing the armaments of Europe. He would have wished to transform France into a camp, and its towns into arsenals. The soldiers appertained to him, but the citizens were divided. Besides, it was not without fear that he set the

instruments of the revolution in motion, by authorizing the re-establishment of popular clubs, and the formation of civic confederations; circumstances which gave him occasion to fear that he had regenerated anarchy—he who had boasted so much of having dethroned it. What solicitudes, what anxieties, and what constraint he was compelled to infuse into his measures, in order to mitigate the violence of associations, the management of which was so dangerous!

This affectation of popularity had upheld him in public opinion until the moment of his *acte additionnel aux constitutions de l'empire*. Napoleon considered the latter as his title-deeds to the crown, and in annulling them he would have considered himself in the light of commencing a new reign. He who could only date from possession, *de facto*, preferred to model his system, in a ridiculous manner, after the fashion of Louis XVIII., who computed time according to the data of legitimacy. Instead of a national constitution, which he had promised, he contented himself with modifying the political laws and the *senatus-consulta* which governed the empire. He re-established the confiscation of property, against which almost all his councillors protested. In fine, he persevered, in a council held upon this subject, not to submit his constitution to public debates, and to present it to the nation, as an *act additionnel*. I strongly contended against his resolution, as well as Decrès, Caulaincourt, and almost all the members present. He persisted, in spite of our exertions, to comprise all his concessions within the compass of this irregular design.

The word *additionnel* disenchanted the friends of liberty. They recognized in it the ill-disguised continuation of the chief institutions created in favour of absolute power. From that moment, Napoleon to their view became an incurable despot; and I, for my part, regarded him in the light of a madman delivered, bound hand and foot, to the mercy of Europe. Confined to that description of popular suffrage which Savary and Réal directed, he caused some of the

lowest classes to be assembled, who, under the name of *Federés*, marched in procession under the windows of the Tuileries, uttering repeatedly exclamations of *Vive l'Empereur!* There he himself announced to this mobocracy that, if the kings dared to attack him, he would proceed to encounter them on the frontiers. This humiliating scene disgusted even the soldiers. Never had that man, who had worn the purple with so much lustre, contributed so greatly to degrade it. He was no longer, in patriotic opinion, considered in other light than as an actor subjected to the applauses of the vilest of the populace.

Scenes of this humiliating description made a strong impression on my mind; well assured, moreover, that all the allied powers, unanimous in their resolution, were preparing to march against us, or, rather, against him, I proceeded early the next day to the Tuileries; and a second time I represented to Napoleon, in still stronger colours, that it was an absolute impossibility for France, in her divided condition, to sustain the assault of universal and united Europe; that it was incumbent upon him to explain himself without disguise to the nation; to assure himself of the ultimate intentions of the allied sovereigns, and that if they persisted, as everything gave reason to infer, there would then be no room for hesitation; that his interests, and those of his country, imposed upon him the obligation of withdrawing to the United States.

But, from the reply which he stammered, in which he mingled plans of campaigns, punishments, battles, insurrections, colossal projects, decrees of destiny, I perceived that he was resolved to trust the fate of France to the issue of war, and that the military faction carried the day in spite of my admonitions.

The assembly of the Champ-de-Mai was nothing but a vain pageantry, in which Napoleon, in the garb of a citizen, hoped to mislead the populace by the charm of a public ceremony. The different parties were not more satisfied

with it, than they had been with the *acte additionnel ;* one faction wished that he had re-established a republic ; and the other that in divesting himself of the crown, he had left the sovereign people in possession of the right of offering it to the most worthy ; and, finally, the coalition of statesmen, of whom I constituted the soul, reproached him with not having availed himself of that solemnity to proclaim Napoleon II.—an event which would have given us a *point d'appui* in certain cabinets, and, probably, would have preserved us from a second invasion. It will not be denied that, in the critical position of France, the last expedient would have been most reasonable.

As soon as we had acquired the conviction that all attempts to produce this result in the interior of France would be unsuccessful, without proceeding to the extremity of a deposition, which the military party would not have suffered, it was necessary to make up our minds to the expectation of seeing all the gates of war thrown open. My impatience then augmented, and I laboured to accelerate the march of events. It was in vain that Davoust, in council, had reiterated to Napoleon that his presence with the army was indispensable ; relying too little on the capital to leave it behind him for any length of time without mistrust, he did not resolve on his departure till everything was ready to strike an effectual blow on the frontiers of Belgium, in the hope of making his début by a triumph, and of re-conquering popularity by victory. He departed ; he departed, I say, leaving the care of his *federés* to Réal ; large sums of money to get them to cry " Napoleon, or Death ; " and authority as to the publication of his military bulletins, with a plan of the campaign arranged for the offensive, and the secret of which was communicated to me by Davoust.

In so decisive a moment, my position became very delicate, as well as very difficult ; I wished to have nothing further to do with Napoleon ; yet, if he should be victorious, I should be compelled to submit to his yoke, as well as the

whole of France, whose calamities he would prolong. On the other hand, I had engagements with Louis XVIII. ; not that I was inclined to his restoration ; but prudence required that I should procure for myself beforehand something in the shape of a guarantee. My agents, moreover, to M. de Metternich and Lord Wellington had promised mountains and marvels. The generalissimo, at least, expected that I should divulge to him the plan of the campaign.

In the first impulse—but the voice of my country, the glory of the French army which now appeared to me in any other light than that of the nation, in short, the dictates of honour, startled me at the thought, that the word traitor might ever become an appendage to the name of the Duke d'Otranto ; and my resolution remained unsullied. Meantime, in such a conjuncture, what resolution was to be taken by a statesman, who ought never to be left without resources ? This is the resolution I took. I knew positively that the unexpected onset of Napoleon's force would occur on the 16th or 18th, at latest ; Napoleon, indeed, had determined to give battle, on the 17th, to the English army, then separated from the Prussians, after having previously routed the latter. He was so much more justified in expecting that his plan would be successful, that Wellington, deceived by false reports, thought it possible to delay the opening of the campaign till the 1st of July. The success of Napoleon rested, therefore, on the success of a surprise ; I took my measures accordingly. On the very day of Napoleon's departure, I provided Madame D—— with notes, written in cipher, disclosing the plan of the campaign, and sent her off. At the same time I occasioned impediments on the part of the frontier which she was to pass, in such a manner as to prevent her reaching the headquarters of Wellington till after the result. This is a true explanation of the inconceivable supineness of the generalissimo, which occasioned so universal an astonishment, and conjectures of so opposite a description.

If, therefore, Napoleon fell it was owing to his own destiny; treason had nothing to do with his defeat. He, himself, did all that could be done in order to conquer; but his fall was divested of dignity. If I am asked what I think he ought to have done, I will reply, as old Horace did—*Qu'il mourût!*

It was on condition of his coming out of the contest as a victor, that the patriots had consented to give him their support; he was vanquished, and they considered the compact at an end. I learnt, at the same moment, the circumstance of his nocturnal arrival at l'Elysée, and that at Laon, after his defeat, Maret, at his instigation, had broached the advice of his quitting the army, and proceeding, without loss of time, to Paris, in order to avert a sudden reaction. I was also informed in the morning, that Lucien, keeping up his courage, endeavoured to derive resources from a desperate resolution; that he urged him to seize the dictatorship—to surround himself with nothing but military elements—and to dissolve the chamber.

It was then that I was impressed with the necessity of setting in motion all the resources of my position and my experience. The defeat of the emperor, his presence at Paris, which occasioned a universal indignation, provided me with a favourable opportunity of extorting from him an abdication, which he had declined when it might have saved him. I set in motion all my friends, all my adherents, and all my agents, whom I provided with the watch-word. For myself, I communicated, before attending the council, with the principal members of all the parties. To the unquiet, suspicious, and fearful members of the chamber, I said, "It is now necessary to act; we must say little, and resort to force; he is returned raving; he is determined upon dissolving the chamber and seizing the dictatorship. I trust we shall not suffer such a return to tyranny as this." I said to the partisans of Napoleon, "Are you not aware that the ferment against the emperor

has reached the highest pitch, among the majority of the deputies? His fall is desired; his abdication is demanded. If you are bent on serving him, you have but one certain path to follow, and that is to make head vigorously against them, to show them what power you still retain, and to affirm that one single word would be sufficient to dissolve the chamber." I also entered into their language and views; they then disclosed their secret inclinations, and I was enabled to say to the heads of the patriots, who rallied round me: "You perceive that his best friends make no mystery of it; the danger is pressing; in a few hours the chambers will exist no longer; and you will have much to answer for, in neglecting to seize the only moment when you could prevent a dissolution."

The council being assembled, Napoleon caused Maret to read the bulletin of the battle of Waterloo; and concluded by declaring, that in order to save the country, it was indispensable that he should be invested with larger powers; in short, with a temporary dictatorship. That he might seize it, but that he thought it more useful and more national to wait for its being conferred on him by the chambers. I left to such of my colleagues who thought and acted with me, the task of contending against this proposition, which had already fallen into disrepute and ruin.

It was then that M. de Lafayette, apprized of what was passing in the council, and sure of the majority, brought his motion for the permanency of the chambers, a motion which disconcerted the whole military party, and, rallying the patriotic party, conferred upon it a considerable moral force.

Kept in check by the chambers, Napoleon did not dare to take any step; he sounded Davoust as to the feasibility of effecting its dissolution by military means; but Davoust declined.

The next day, we all manœuvred to extort his abdication. There was a multitude of messages backwards and forwards,

parleys, objections, replies—in a word, evolutions of every description; ground was taken, abandoned, and again retaken. At length, after a warm battle, Napoleon surrendered, in full council, under the conviction that longer resistance was useless; then turning to me, he said, with a sardonic smile, "Write to those gentlemen to make themselves easy; they shall be satisfied." Lucien took up the pen, and drew, under Napoleon's dictation, the act of abdication, such as it was afterwards made public.

Here then was a change of scene; the power having passed away from the hands of Napoleon, who was to remain master of the field? I soon detected the secret designs of the cabinet; I discovered that the Bonapartist party, now under the guidance of Lucien, intended, as a consequence of the abdication, to countenance the immediate proclamation of Napoleon II., and the establishment of a council of regency. This would have been to have suffered the hostile camp to triumph. In fact, that regency which had been for so long a time the drift of all my calculations, and the object of all my desires, being now about to be organized under another influence than mine, excluded me from a share in the government. It was necessary, therefore, to recur to new combinations, and to man counter-batteries, in order, with equal address, to defeat the system of the regency and the restoration of the Bourbons. I therefore conceived the creation of a provisional government, established in conformity with my own suggestions, and which, in consequence, I should be able to direct according to my own views. I presented myself to the chamber with a view of inducing it to act with decision in consecrating the principles and the laws of the revolution.

The chamber having accepted the abdication of Napoleon without noticing the condition it contained, Lucien exerted himself to procure the proclamation of Napoleon II. He had in his favour the *federés*, the soldiers, the populace, and a large part of the chamber of peers. I had on my

side the majority of the lower chamber, a party also in the chamber of peers, the national guard, the greater part of the generals, and the royalists, who courted and surrounded me in the hope that I should direct the throw of the die in favour of the Bourbons.

Lucien had already sent Réal to the Elysée in order to assemble the *federés* under the windows of Napoleon. It was with great difficulty that the assent of the ex-emperor was obtained; it was only procured by remarking that my party intended to consider his abdication as a single and unqualified act; that if he did not at least preserve some shadow of his power, neither his security by flight, nor the conveyance of his wealth could be answered for; that, moreover, the abdication in favour of his son might probably induce Austria to obtain more favourable conditions from the rest of the allies in his behalf. Réal immediately entered the field, and raked together all the *canaille* of Paris in the *Champs Elysées;* while Lucien, on his side, entered his carriage, and hurried to the chamber of peers, where he exclaimed, in an harangue got up for the occasion: "*The emperor is dead; long live the emperor; let us proclaim Napoleon II.!*" The majority appeared to accede to this proposal. Lucien returned in triumph to the *Champs Elysées*, instructed the two or three thousand *brigands* whom Réal had assembled round the palace in their part, and got them to promise to proceed to the chamber of representatives, in order to determine the proclamation of Napoleon II. He *re-entered the Elysée*, and returned upon the terrace with his brother, whose countenance betrayed evident marks of depression. There Napoleon saluted the bands of fanatics, waving his hand, as they defiled before him with acclamations of "*Long live our emperor and his son; we will have no other!*"

But these demonstrations of their zeal gave me little uneasiness. I had my eye upon the most inconsiderable movements, and the only staunch political string was in

my hands. I had, moreover, secured to myself an initiative influence; and at the very moment of this ridiculous hubbub, the chamber were naming an executive provisional committee, the presidentship of which devolved upon me.

Meanwhile Réal had given the pass-word to the *federés*, ordering them to march in procession before the palace of the legislative body; they flocked thither in crowds; but it was too late; the terrified legislators had just abandoned the hall, after having appointed a committee. Night dispersed the mob, which, in passing through the streets of Paris, affrighted the citizens with the discharge of their muskets, and set up loud cries of "Death to all who refuse to recognize Napoleon II.!"

The agitation of the day was terminated by nocturnal meetings, the preludes of one of the most animated of public sittings which was to occur on the following day. Next morning, I and my colleagues, Caulaincourt, Carnot, Quinette, and General Grenier, entered on our new possession of the reins of government. We were proceeding in the task of our organization, when I learnt that the deputy Bérenger, at the opening of the sitting, had just demanded that the members of the committee should be held collectively responsible. The obvious drift of this proposal was to engage each of them to separate themselves from my vote, and to watch my proceedings, which was a consequence of the suspicions which I occasioned among the Bonapartist faction. As if he had not said enough, Bérenger added, "If these men be inviolable, you will, in case any one of them should betray his duty, possess no means of punishing him."

I cared very little for these underhanded attacks; as I have before said, my party was the strongest.

The councillor of state, Boulay de la Meurthe, one of the most zealous partisans of Bonaparte, went so far as to deliver a philippic, in which he pointed out and denounced the Orleans faction; this was apprizing the friends of the

Bourbons and the Bonapartists, that a third party was making its appearance in favour of the doctrine of *de facto* government, which for three months we had been opposing to the doctrine of legitimacy.

It is certain, that, finding myself embarked with a new party, more accordant with my principles than those which offered no other prospect than an absolute government or counter-revolution; and, feeling the impossibility of preserving the throne of Napoleon II., I felt more inclined to second the efforts of this new party, provided the cabinets should not exhibit too hostile a feeling towards it. The declamation of Boulay had for its principal object to cause the proclamation of Napoleon II. by the chamber. The party was strong, and it required some address to avert its attack. M. Manuel undertook the delicate task in a discourse which obtained universal applause, and in which it was fancied that the stamp of my policy was discernible. He concluded by opposing himself to the design of investing any member of the Bonaparte family with the regency; that was the decisive point, and that was abandoning the field of battle to me. The assent of the chamber was a new guarantee to the committee of government, and conferred upon me, in my character of president, an incontestable preponderance in public affairs.

Our first operation, after being installed on the 23rd of June, was to cause the war to be declared national, and to send five plenipotentiaries[1] to the headquarters of the allies, with powers to negotiate peace, and to signify assent to any species of government but that of the Bourbons. Their secret instructions went to the effect of conferring the crown, in default of Napoleon II., on the King of Saxony, or the Duke of Orleans, whose party had been reinforced by a great number of deputies and generals.

[1] These plenipotentiaries were M. de Lafayette, Laforet, Pontécoulaut, d'Argenson, and Sébastiani. M. Benjamin Constant accompanied them in quality of secretary to the embassy.—*Note by the French Editor.*

I confess that I, in this measure, made rather a large concession to the actual leaders, and that I secretly entertained strong doubts as to their attainment of the object they proposed. I had also so much the more reason to believe that the cause of the Bourbons was far from desperate, as one of my secret agents shortly arrived to inform me of Louis XVIII.'s entry into Cambray, and to bring me his royal declaration. Our plenipotentiaries, therefore, were at first amused with dilatory answers.

My position may be conceived. The party of Napoleon, always in activity, was recruited, if I may use the term, by eighty thousand soldiers, who arrived to make a stand under the walls of Paris ; while the allied armies rapidly advanced on the capital, driving before them all the battalions and divisions which attempted to obstruct their passage. It was incumbent upon me, at one and the same time, to secure the generals, in order to control the army ; to counteract the new plans of Bonaparte, which tended to nothing short of replacing him at the head of the troops ; and to repress the impatience of the royalists, whose wish it was to open the gates of Paris to Louis XVIII.—and all this in the midst of the unloosing of so many contending passions, whence terrible convulsions were likely to be engendered.

I will not occupy the reader with narrating, in this place, a multitude of minor intrigues, of accessory details, of disappointments and disputes, which, during the tornado, inflicted upon me all the tribulations of power. Previous to the abdication, I was spied upon, and continually kept on the *qui vive* by the zealous partisans of Napoleon, such as Maret, Thibaudeau, Boulay de la Meurthe, and even Regnault, who was sometimes in my favour, and sometimes opposed to me ; now, I had to guard myself against the pretensions of another party ; I had to fortify myself against the mistrust of my own colleagues, of Carnot among the rest, who, from having been a republican, had

become so attached to the emperor, that he had bewailed him with a flood of tears in my presence, after having stood alone, and that abortively, against the measure of his abdication.

It may be easily conceived, that I did not succeed in muzzling this mob of high functionaries, marshals and generals, by any other means than pledging my head, if I may so express myself, for the safety of their persons and fortunes. It was in this manner that I obtained *carte blanche* to negotiate.

I began with sending to Wellington's headquarters my friend M. G——, a man of probity, and on whom I placed entire reliance. He was the bearer of two letters, sewed in the collar of his coat, one for the king, and the other for the Duke of Orleans; for up to the latest moment, and while involved in protracted uncertainty as to the intention of the allies, no means could justifiably be neglected for returning into safe harbour. My emissary was immediately introduced before Lord Wellington, and told him that he wished to see the Duke of Orleans. "He is not here," the generalissimo replied; "but you can address yourself to your king." And, in fact, he took the road to Cambray, and presented himself before his majesty. Finding that he did not return, I despatched General de T—— on the same errand; a man of courage and intelligence, whom I expressly commissioned to sound the intention of Lord Wellington, to apprize him of my peculiar situation, to state how much the public mind was exasperated, and public feeling inflamed; and that I could not answer for the preservation of France from the scourge of fire and sword, if the design of reseating the Bourbons on the throne was persevered in. I offered to treat directly with him on any other basis. The reply of the generalissimo was on this occasion peremptory and negative; he declared that he had orders not to treat on any other terms than the re-establishment of Louis XVIII. As to the Duke of

Orleans, he could only be considered—so Lord Wellington expressed himself—in the light of a royal usurper. This reply, which I carefully concealed from my colleagues, rendered my position still more embarrassing.

On the other hand, our plenipotentiaries, having left Laon on the 26th of June, arrived on the 1st of July at the headquarters of the allied sovereigns at Haguenau. There the sovereigns, not considering it proper to grant them an audience, appointed a commission to hear their proposals. To the question, which I had foreseen could not fail of being addressed to them ; "By what right does the nation pretend to expel its king, and choose another sovereign ?" they replied, "By an example derived from the History of England itself."

Apprized by this question of the disposition of the allies, the national plenipotentiaries exerted themselves less to obtain Napoleon II., than to repel Louis XVIII. They insinuated, in fact, that the nation might accept the Duke of Orleans or the King of Saxony, if it was not permitted to secure the throne to the son of Maria-Louisa. After several unimportant parleys, they were dismissed with a note, implying, that the allied court could not, for the present, enter into any negotiation ; that they considered it as a *sine qua non*, that Napoleon should be placed for the future out of a condition to disturb the repose of France and Europe ; and that, after the events which had occurred in March, the allied powers found it their duty to demand that he should be placed under their superintendence.

The committee of government then found itself frustrated in its hope of obtaining the Duke of Orleans or Napoleon II. Even before the return of the plenipotentiaries, I was directly informed of the real intentions of the allied powers.

I employed myself from that time in imparting such a direction to the course of events as should cause them to terminate in a result at once most favourable to my country and to myself. I had demanded an armistice, and with that

view sent commissioners [1] to the allied generals, who had just commenced the siege of the capital. Blucher and Wellington eluded every proposal on the subject, raising more than objections against the government of Napoleon II.; adverting to Louis XVIII. as the only sovereign who appeared to them calculated to unite in his person all the conditions which would prevent Europe from exacting future pledges for its security; and vehemently complaining of the presence of Bonaparte at Paris, in contempt of his abdication. That personage, as if a fatality impelled him to plunge into the abyss which yawned before him, had, in the first instance, persevered, instead of precipitately gaining one of our seaports, in remaining at the palace of the Elysée; and subsequently at Malmaison, in the protracted hope of repossessing himself of authority, if not as emperor, at least as general. Urged by fanatical friends, he even went so far as to address to us a formal demand of that description. It was then that I exclaimed, before a full meeting of the committee: "This man is mad to a certainty! Does he wish, then, to involve us in his ruin?" And here I am bound to say, that the whole committee, even Carnot himself, voted with me for a definite resolution to be taken with respect to him. His actions were superintended, and Davoust was determined to arrest him on the least attempt which he might make to seduce the army from us. It was so much the more incumbent upon us to take a decisive step with reference to him, as the enemy's cavalry, pushing their detachments even as far as the environs of Malmaison, might capture him from one moment to another; and some share in such an event would not have failed to be imputed to myself. It was necessary to negotiate for his departure, and to send a general officer to superintend it. The result is known. This short explanation of facts will be sufficient to rebut the accusations of blind and malicious detractors,

[1] MM. Andréossy, Bossy-d'Anglas, Flaugergues, Valence, and Labesnardière.—*Note by the French Editor.*

who, perceiving some resemblance between the captivity of Napoleon and that of Perseus, king of Macedonia, have attributed the former to treacherous combinations, which, computing days and hours, delivered him into the hands of the English through the operation of an underhanded and skilfully-conducted intrigue.

We hoped, after the departure of Napoleon, to be able to obtain an armistice,—but it was not so. It was then that I wrote the two letters, which have been made public, to each of the generals-in-chief of the besieging armies. It may be remarked in those letters, wherein I feigned, in conformity with the necessity of the case, to plead the cause of Napoleon II., that I considered the question irrevocably decided in favour of the Bourbons ; but, in order to lull the vigilance of parties, it was indispensable for me to exhibit the appearance of alternately leaning towards the younger branch and the reigning branch. I hoped, moreover, that by aiding Louis XVIII. to remount the throne, I should induce that prince to detach some dangerous individuals from his presence, and to make new concessions to France, reserving to myself, if I could obtain nothing, the means of subsequently recurring to other combinations.

I had at that time some nocturnal interviews with M. de Vitrolles, whose liberty I had just procured, and with several other eminent royalists, as well as two marshals, who inclined towards the Bourbons. I despatched emissaries at the same time to the King, the Duke of Wellington, and M. de Talleyrand. I knew that M. de Talleyrand, after quitting Vienna, had proceeded to Frankfort, and subsequently to Wisbaden, in order to be nearer at hand for the purpose of negotiating either with Ghent or Paris. Decided as he was against Napoleon, he, however, thought it proper, on his return to Paris, to come to an understanding with me, promising, on his side, to secure my interest with the Bourbons, whose re-establishment, after the battle of Waterloo, appeared to him infallible. I thought that he

would at that time be near the person of the king, and I knew, beyond a doubt, that, in order to retain the control over affairs, he would require the dismissal of M. de Blacas. I arranged my measures accordingly ; but it was almost impossible to avoid exciting the distrust of my colleagues. My proceedings were watched, and I was obliged to support reproaches and indignant declamations from some revolutionary and Bonapartist partisans, whose imputations I coldly repelled. Such was my position, that I was obliged to have negotiations with all parties, and compromise with all sorts of opinion either for my own interest or that of the state. I did not disguise from myself, that conduct such as this, which of necessity comprised something mysterious and underhanded, was calculated to rouse all kinds of suspicion against me, as well as all kinds of resentment on the part of factions wounded in their dearest hopes. The formidable moment would naturally be that when light should dawn on this chaos of multitudinous and conflicting intrigues.

A more serious and dangerous consideration still, was the ferment of the *federés*, and the violence of the fanatics in the chamber, who by turns excited against me the individuals of my own party, the soldiers, and the populace. I wrote to Lord Wellington, that it was high time to put a stop to their ravings and excesses, or that they would shortly leave me without the capability of acting. But Wellington was thwarted by his intractible colleague, Blucher ; that Prussian general, impelled by his native impatience and irritability, wished to penetrate into Paris, in order, as he said, to secure the better class of citizens from the pillage with which they were menaced by the mob ; and he professed that it was only within the walls of the capital he would consent to the conclusion of an armistice. His letter exasperated us ; but what could we do ? It was necessary to sustain a siege, and give battle under the walls of Paris, or capitulate. Discouraged by the abdication, the soldiers appeared irresolute,

and even the generals were intimidated by the uncertainty of their prospects. The minister of war and general-in-chief of the army, Davoust, wrote to me that he had conquered his prejudices, and was now persuaded that no other means of safety remained than that of instantly proclaiming Louis XVIII. I laid my answer before the committee. The members thought that I looked at the question of the recall of Louis XVIII. in too implicit a manner, and that I gave Davoust too great a degree of latitude. I got over this trivial difficulty, the marshal's determination having appeared to me so important, that I had promised him safe conduct, on behalf of the king, through the intervention of M. de Vitrolles.

Compelled to deliberate upon our military position, the committee, in conformity with my advice, appealed to the intelligence, the counsel, and the responsibility of the most experienced individuals in the art of war. The principal generals were convoked in presence of the presidents and committees of the two chambers. A report of the situation of Paris was made through the medium of Carnot, who had himself visited our positions, and those of the enemy. Carnot declared that the left bank of the Seine was entirely uncovered, and offered a wide field to the enterprise of the generals-in-chief of the two combined armies, who had just marched the major part of their forces in that direction. I confess that I attached great national importance to the circumstance of preventing a protracted defence of Paris. We were in a desperate condition ; the treasury was empty, credit extinct, and the government at the last extremity ; in short, Paris, in consequence of the existence and collision of so many different opinions, stood over the mouth of a volcano. On the other hand, its neighbourhood was daily inundated by new arrivals of foreign troops. If, under circumstances like these, the capital should be carried by main force, we had nothing further to hope ; neither capitulation, arrangement, nor concession. In one single day, which

would have thus completed what Leipsic and Waterloo left undone, all the interests of the revolution might be for ever ingulfed in a torrent of French blood. This, nevertheless, was what the fanatics of a party, in its last death-struggles, desired.

In such a crisis, was it not deserving well of the country, to replace France, without effusion of blood, under the authority of Louis XVIII.? Were we to wait till foreign armies delivered us bound hand and foot into the hands of our adversaries? I succeeded, by dint of insinuations and promises, in persuading men, who, till that moment, had been intractable.

It was decided that the military question should be submitted, the night following, to a council of war convoked by Marshal Davoust. The possibility of defending Paris was thus about to be determined. To capitulate would save Paris, but compromise the national cause; to give battle would be attended by great and inevitable dangers, to a capital distracted by all the excesses of popular fury, in case we should be vanquished. And in fact, to what tremendous risks would those whose wish it was to give battle have exposed that immense city, and France itself, in the event of a defeat.

The discussions were solemn; and in consequence of the negative and unanimous resolution of the council of war, the committee decreed that Paris should not be defended, and that the town should be delivered into the hands of the allies, since they would not consent to suspend hostilities on any other condition. But Blucher required also the surrender of the army; such a clause could not be accepted; it was to require that everything should be delivered up to fire and sword. I hastily despatched to the two hostile generals, MM. Tromeling and Macirone, to whom I consigned, unknown to the committee, a confidential note conceived in these terms: "The army is dissatisfied because it is unfortunate; comfort it, it will become faithful and

devoted. The indocility of the chambers arises from the same cause. Tranquillize every one, and every one will be in your favour. Let the army be removed; the chambers will assent to this, if they are promised that the guarantees specified by the king will be added to the charter. In order to understand each other well, mutual explanation is necessary; do not therefore make your entrance into Paris, before three days are elapsed. In that space of time, every body will have come to an agreement. The chambers will be gained over; they will conceive themselves to be independent, and sanction everything under that impression. Force must not be employed with them, but persuasion."

Blucher soon became more manageable; and consent was given to negotiate the military surrender of Paris, which was concluded at Saint Cloud, on the 3rd of July. I objected to the name of capitulation being given to this treaty; and I caused that of *convention* to be substituted for it, which appeared to me less harsh, and therefore more unobjectionable.

Faction was still in too exasperated a state to allow of security from tumult and disorder. It was necessary to oppose the national guard to the *federés*, who were not restrained without difficulty, by the mass of peaceable citizens. Réal, who had the direction of the *federés*, and who, I knew, was very easily frightened, yielded to my advice, affecting to be taken ill, and abandoned his office of prefect of police. The faction gave the post to Courtin, a *protegé* of Queen Hortense, who, exhibiting herself the greatest energy during the whole of the great crisis, vainly endeavoured to support the relics of the expiring Bonapartist party. All these manœuvres ended in their own defeat, by the greatest of all interests, the interest of all. It was not long before imputations were made against the generals and the committee, of having sacrificed Paris and betrayed the army. In order to justify the conduct of the government, I addressed an explanatory proclamation to the French, in which I pointed out the vital necessity of a

union of all ranks, without which there was no probability of reaching the term of our misfortunes.

After having capitulated with the foreigners, it was necessary to capitulate with the army, who, at the very moment of marching to the Loire, mutinied, in order to extort from us their arrears of pay; thanks to a few millions, advanced by the banker Lafitte, the mutineers were disarmed, and the needy satisfied. Meantime, all the emissaries and agents of the king, and among the rest, M. de Vitrolles, with whom Davoust and myself conferred, assured us, that the king would shut his eyes upon all that had passed, and that a general reconciliation would be the earnest of his return. I had already conquered many unfavourable feelings by the aid of these promises, when the royal proclamations, dated from Cambray, and printed by order of the chambers, made their appearance.

This event created a new embarrassment in my position, with regard to the chamber of representatives, who exhibited an increasing hostility against the Bourbons. We soon learnt, at the return of our agents and commissioners, that Wellington and Blucher declared, in an unqualified manner, that the authority of the chambers and the commissions proceeded from an illegitimate source, and that consequently the best thing they could do was to dissolve themselves, and proclaim Louis XVIII.

The commission, then, at the instance of Carnot, deliberated, if it would not be proper to join the chambers and the army behind the Loire. I vehemently contended against this proposal, which would infallibly have rekindled the flames of foreign and domestic war. I maintained that so desperate a project would ruin France; that I was, moreover, satisfied that the greater part of the generals would not subscribe to it, and affirmed that I would be the last to quit Paris. Induced by my arguments, the commission took the more wise and prudent course of waiting the issue of events in Paris.

As soon as the convention of Paris was signed, the Duke of Wellington being informed of my wish to confer with him, expressed an inclination to come to an understanding with me respecting the execution of the convention. The Commission of the government did not object to an interview which took place at the *Château de Neuilly*. On that occasion, I frankly opened my mind to the generalissimo of the allies. I well knew the power of the words moderation and clemency on noble minds; and, without seeking to diminish the culpability of those who had betrayed the Bourbons, I maintained that the re-established throne could only derive consolidation from an entire oblivion of the past. I represented how formidable and menacing the energy of the patriots still was, and referred to the moderate means which would be necessary in order to calm their effervescence; I did not disguise the weakness of the royalists, their intractability and their prejudices; and I affirmed that there was no other means of restoring tranquillity, than by opposing reactions and resentments, and by leaving no faction to indulge the hope of predominating in the state. I claimed the execution of the two authentic declarations of England and Austria, purporting that their intention was not to continue the war with a design of re-establishing the Bourbons, or imposing on France any government whatsoever. The generalissimo replied, that that declaration had no other object but that of preventing war, and was resorted to in the hope that France would not take up arms in the cause of Napoleon, after he had been outlawed by the congress; but that, as we had risen in his favour, we had by that means liberated the allies from an engagement purely conditional. This sophistry did not leave a doubt upon my mind that we had been played upon. Lord Wellington declared to me, without qualification, that the allied powers had formally decided in favour of Louis XVIII., and that that sovereign would make his entry into Paris on the 8th of July. General

Pozzo di Borgo, who was present, repeated the same declaration on behalf of the Emperor of Russia; he communicated to me a letter from Prince Metternich and the Count de Nesselrode, expressive of a determination to recognize no one but Louis XVIII., and not to admit of any proposal at variance with the rights of that monarch. I then insisted on a general amnesty, and required guarantees. On these conditions I consented to serve the king, and even to give him such pledges as might be consistent with my reputation and honour. The generalissimo answered me, that he was determined to dismiss M. de Blacas, and that I should compose part of the council, as well as M. de Talleyrand, the king having condescended to continue me in my office of general police; but he did not disguise from me that all kinds of measures were taken, in order that Napoleon might fall, as a hostage, into the power of the allies, and that it was required of me that I should do nothing to favour his escape. It was also required that the army should submit itself to the king, and that, for the sake of example, a few of its chiefs should be subjected to punishment. To this I objected; I protested, that if Bonaparte had not made his appearence, a crisis would have equally ensued. All my objections failed in shaking a thoroughly made up resolution. I regarded the evil to be without remedy, but at all events capable of being palliated by my presence in the council. The duke announced to me, that the next day he would himself present me to his majesty, or at least convey me in his carriage to the Château d'Arnouville. I replied that it was my intention to address a letter to the king, which I had composed, and which I communicated to him. It was conceived in the following terms:—

"SIRE,—The return of your majesty leaves no other duty to be performed by the members of the government, than that of divesting themselves of their functions. For the exoneration of my conscience, it is my request that I may be

permitted faithfully to describe the state of public opinion and feeling in France.

"It is not your majesty who is dreaded, since you have seen, during the space of eleven months, that a confidence in your majesty's moderation and justice sustained the French people, in the midst of the terror which the proceedings of a portion of your court were calculated to inspire.

"It is universally known, that intelligence and experience are not wanting in your majesty; you understand France and the times; you understand the power of opinion; but your condescension has too often induced you to listen to the pretensions of those who followed you into adversity.

"From that time, France was divided into two nations. It was, doubtless, a painful task for your majesty to be continually obliged to repress the above pretensions by acts resulting from your own will. How many times must you have regretted that it was not in your power to oppose them by national laws.

"If the same system be reproduced, and, if deriving all your powers from hereditary title, your majesty will not recognize any rights of the people but such as originate from concessions of the crown, France, as she was before, will be uncertain as to the nature of her duties; she will continue to waver between her love for her country and her lover for her prince; between her inclination and her experience. Her obedience will have no other basis than her personal confidence in your majesty; and, if that confidence be sufficent to maintain respect, it is likewise by such means that dynasties acquire consolidation, and that dangers are averted. Sire, your majesty has experienced that those who urge the steps of power beyond its proper limits are very inadequate to sustain it when it is shaken; that authority impairs itself by a continual contest, which compels it to retrograde in all its proceedings; that the fewer rights are left to the people, the more its well-founded distrust prompts

it to preserve those which cannot be disputed ; and that it is always by such means as these that loyalty becomes enfeebled, and that revolutions are matured.

"We conjure you, Sire, deign for this once to consult nothing but your own sense of justice and your own enlightened judgment. Be persuaded that the French people attach in these days as much importance to their liberty as to their life. They will never consider themselves free, if there be not rights, equally inviolable, interposed between them and the claims of power. Have we not had, under your dynasty, states-general independent of the monarch ?

" Sire, your wisdom cannot wait for events, in order to make concessions. Under such circumstances, they would be prejudicial to your interests, and probably, increase in their extent. Concessions made now would soothe and pacify the public mind, and give force to royal authority—at a later period, concessions would only prove its weakness : they would be extorted by disorder ; and the public mind would retain its anger."

This letter was addressed on that very day to his majesty. At my return to Paris, I declared to the commission that the return of Louis XVIII. was inevitable ; that such was the determined resolution of the allied powers, and that the time was even fixed for the second day following. I concealed from them that I was retained in office ; a circumstance which, instead of being considered in the light of a guarantee to the patriots, and a species of transition, which would enable the legitimate government, with a less violent shock, to succeed a *de facto* government, would have appeared in the eyes of the fanatics in no other light than the wages of my treason, when, in fact, it was nothing but a well-deserved reward for the safety of Paris. On that very evening the news was spread, and the same individuals loaded me, in their harangues, with insults and maledictions ; the royalists alone addressed me in the language of congratulation. . . . Yes ! I repeat, the royalists ; and, among

the most distinguished writers of that party, there are some who have since confessed that there was a universal exclamation from all parts, that, had it not been for me there would have been neither security for the king nor safety for France ; and that all parties had come to an understanding, to confer the ministry of the police on me.

The next day I repaired to St. Denis, and presented myself at the Château d'Arnouville, in order to have my first audience of the king. I was introduced into his closet by the president of the council, who leant upon my arm. I entreated the king to tranquillize the public mind, by securing to all individuals their personal safety ; I represented to him that clemency was no doubt attended with disadvantages, but that the capitulation, just concluded, appeared to demand that any other system should be rejected ; that a full and entire amnesty, and without any conditions, appeared to me the only method to impart stability to the state, and durability to the government ; that, in this instance, pardon was little more than another word for justice ; and that by an amnesty I understood not only an oblivion of offences, but also a preservation of places, property, honours, and titles.

My discourse seemed to make an impression on the king, who listened to it with unbroken attention. That prince was fully aware of the need in which we stood of skilfulness and tranquillity, in order to reassemble the elements which time and circumstances had dispersed. I thought I perceived that he saw the necessity of throwing a veil over past faults, and of gaining confidence by exemplary moderation and good faith. I made a point of rendering this interview as public as possible, in order to give public opinion an opportunity of foreseeing a probable term to our discords and calamities.

I did not confine myself to entreaties, I went so far as to represent to the king that Paris was in the most violent state of agitation ; that there would be danger to his person

in showing himself at the gates of the capital with the white cockade, and attended exclusively by the emigrants of Ghent. My plan consisted in maintaining the continuance of the chambers, in prevailing upon the king to assume the tricolor cockade, and to dismiss all his military household. In a word, it was my wish, as it always had been, to see Louis XVIII. heading the march of the revolution, and so contributing to its consolidation.

These different views were submitted to deliberation in the council; my proposals were only rejected by the majority of a single vote. The king, besides, remained inflexible. Sooner than consent, he declared he would rather return to Hartwell. Accordingly, his military household was not dissolved, and it was decided that the representatives should be expelled next day from the chamber. That chamber had just laid down, in a new bill of rights, the fundamental principles of the constitution which, according to the views it entertained, could alone satisfy the public desire. Although I had not expected much success from my proceedings, because my tact in public affairs had sufficiently apprized me of their tendency, it appeared to me that I ought to neglect nothing for the acquittal of my conscience.

The very evening of the 7th of July, several Prussian battalions forced the gates of the Tuileries, and invaded the courts and the avenues of the palace. The commission of the government, being no longer free, discontinued its functions, and announced the fact by a message. One particular circumstance made this separation of my colleagues remarkable. Carnot, the most incensed of all in seeing me continued in my office, and placed, as it were, under my *serveillance*, until a place of residence was appointed for him, wrote me the following note: "*Traitor*! where dost thou require me to go?" I answered in the same laconic manner: "Fool! where you please." It must be confessed that I had, in the council, several altercations

with Carnot, who never forgave me for having called him an old woman.

The next day, as early as eight o'clock in the morning, the deputies made their appearance, in order to enter the hall of their deliberations; but finding the doors closed, surrounded by guards and *gendarmes*, they withdrew. A few of them repairing to the house of their president, there subscribed a protest.

The king made his public entry into Paris; nothing disturbed the excessive joy of the royalists, who hurried to meet their monarch, and appeared in very considerable numbers. I must confess that my presentiment was, in some degree, deceived, and that all my apprehensions did not receive conformation. Thus finished the reign of a hundred days, and thus re-commenced a reign which had been interrupted during its first year. But what were the omens which accompanied this new accession? Passions in a state of ferment; resentments thirsting for satiation; interests struggling and contending together; minds in a state of frenzy and rage; in short, ulcerated feelings ready for reaction! In so deplorable a conjuncture, I did not withhold from my country the benefit of my labours and exertions.

The surrender of Bonaparte, the successive submission of all the towns and all the provinces in France, soon announced that the country was pacified in all such respects as could interest the allied sovereigns; but it could not be perfectly so, as regarded the repose and welfare of the king, unless everything was forgotten; unless there was an equal restraint upon all extreme opinions, from whatsoever source those opinions might be derived; and unless, in short, all the parties of the state enjoyed the protection of the laws, with the same certainty and the same security.

Such was the moderation and clemency which I recommended to Louis XVIII. (as I had previously done with Napoleon), at the same time that I proposed efficacious

measures for averting the results of all such causes as tended to re-plunge France into the abyss of a new revolution. But every one, either in or out of the council, did not share my views; examples and punishments were considered necessary. I had already, for a fortnight, constituted a part of the royal administration, when the *ordonnance* of the 24th of July made its appearance; fifty-seven individuals, divided into two categories, were therein proscribed, without trial. It will be asked, how I could countersign such an act, which affected individuals who had pursued the same line of politics as myself. Let it be known, then, that ever since the day following the 8th of July, the desire of proscribing had possessed all classes of the royalist party, from the *salons* of the Faubourg St. Germain, to the antechambers of the palace of the Tuileries, and that thousands of names, obscure as well as notorious, were pointed out to the police department for the purpose of being involved in a general measure of proscription. Heads were demanded of the minister of police, as pledges of his sincere devotion to the royal cause. There only remained two paths for me to follow; that of making myself an accomplice in acts of vengeance, or that of giving up my office. To the first I could not subscribe; the second, I was too deeply compromised to adopt. I discovered a third expedient, and that was to reduce the list to a small number of names, selected from persons who had acted the most conspicuous part during the late events: and here I must confess that I met in the council, and more especially in the eminently French feelings of the monarch, with everything that was calculated to mitigate those measures of excessive rigour, and to diminish the number of the victims.

But the torrent of reaction threatened to sweep away all the barriers opposed to it. I had conceived the design of acting the part of mediator between the king and the patriots. I soon perceived that the only intention was to make use of me as a necessary instrument for the re-estab-

lishment of a royal power without counterpoise and limit, and which would have offered no guarantee to the men of the revolution. The two *ordonnances*, with regard to the electoral colleges and the elections which were about to furnish France with the chamber of 1815, left me no longer a shadow of doubt upon this point. It has been thought that I exhibited a culpable neglect in the formation of the electoral colleges; and it has been said that it was not excusable in a statesman like myself, grown old in experience and the exercise of important functions, to commit such a political error, nor to be mistaken as to the bias which the royalist faction, now re-possessed of influence, exerted itself to impart to public opinion. My principles and my anterior conduct ought to have secured me from similar imputations. This accusation as to imprudent carelessness and fatal indifference in such grave conjunctures must be laid to the amiable selfishness and the *nonchalante* supineness of the president of the council, who indulged himself in sensual illusions, and did not wish to see anything else in the *fauteuil* of a minister, but a resting-place.

I was roused by this; it was then that my notes, addressed to the allied powers, and my reports, presented to the king in full council, appeared to the world. I had drawn them, in conformity with the wishes of the allied sovereigns, in order to supply them with materials for judging of the actual condition of France. The publication of those documents produced a profound sensation on enlightened minds; but their contents exasperated to the highest degree the *ultra-royalist* party,[1] who regarded its influence as lost, if my disclosures led to a change of system. The king himself was displeased at the publicity given to reports of a confidential nature: but I had pre-considered my position; deceived by M. de Vitrolles, whom I had

[1] It was Fouché who first made use of this expression, which has since become familiar, and which indeed has been quite worn out.—*Note by the French Editor.*

introduced into the king's cabinet, deserted by the president of the council, whom the past did not oblige to sacrifice the present, I perceived that my fall was inevitable, unless I could succeed in giving preponderance to my designs.

Shall I confess it in this place? Yes; I have promised to disguise nothing. My notes and my reports were intended to impart unity and integrity to the dislocated and scattered members of the revolution, and especially to give Europe cause to fear a national insurrection; by that means, I hoped to intimidate her so much, on the score of an explosion, that she would consent to grant us, as the price of a definitive treaty of peace, that which I had never ceased soliciting since the congress of Prague—the dynasty of Napoleon, which had become the single object of our secret demands, of our desires, and of our efforts. The interview of two powerful monarchs contributed to disperse hopes which were not without foundation. It belongs to history to collect and compare circumstances which it does not appertain to me to elucidate. I may say I am summing up my whole life, when I declare that it was my wish to conquer for the revolution, and that the revolution has been conquered in me.

THE END

INDEX.

ALEXANDER, Emperor of Russia, 142, 200, 216, 240, 281, 283, 297, 298, 304, 308, 315, 316, 322, 340, 408, 431, 432
Artois, Count d', 105, 182, 403, 411
Augereau, General, 22, 57, 69, 85, 115, 187, 335, 343, 344, 369, 402, 403, 404, 434

BARRAS, Comte de, 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 37, 39, 41, 45, 46, 49, 50, 52, 53, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 76, 77, 78, 83
Barrère, 117
Beauharnais, Eugène de, 74, 202, 240, 335, 369, 373, 375, 400, 401, 418
Beauharnais, Hortense, 185, 186, 222, 272, 424, 431, 432
Benseval, 5
Bentinck, Lord William, 342, 379, 382, 391 n.
Bernadotte, General, 36, 44, 52, 57, 58, 59, 61, 69, 115, 141, 142, 187, 232, 233, 241, 275, 291, 292, 322, 346, 355, 356
Berri, Duke de, 182
Berthier, General, 65, 70, 75, 88, 94, 137, 138, 148, 154, 187, 201, 206, 234, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 264, 314, 343, 347, 348, 352, 354, 355, 363
Blacas, M. de, 413, 414, 415, 418, 433, 455, 461
Blucher, Marshal, 346, 453, 455, 457, 458, 459
Bonaparte, Caroline, 268, 343, 390
——— Eliza, 152, 164, 206, 261, 262, 264, 268, 391, 394, 401
——— Joseph, 37, 62, 63, 94, 103, 142, 164, 166, 189, 206, 293, 295, 301, 333, 347, 388, 408
——— Louis, 186, 206, 268, 271, 272, 273
——— Lucien, 37, 44, 60, 62, 63, 67, 71, 72, 81, 82, 85, 86, 94, 111, 118, 120, 121, 122, 143, 154, 164, 165, 446, 447
——— Napoleon, suppresses the counter revolution, 16; forms political clubs in the army, 21; ordered to Egypt, 26; returns to Paris, 62; forms a party, 65; seizes power, 83; consul, 86; proscriptions, 90; and the bankers, 101; crosses the Alps, 107; Marengo, 108; plot to assassinate, 116; dispute with Lucien, 121; another plot, 123; attempt on his life, 127; the opera singer, 137; concordat, 154; life consul, 161; Swiss constitution, 171; attacked by the English press, 175; orders the arrest of all Englishmen, 178; preparation for war, 178; proposal to Bourbons, 179; Duke d'Enghien, 181; proclaimed Emperor, 184; Joséphine and Hortense, 185; anointed

by the Pope, 195; crowned at Milan, 196; attempt on England, 196; war with Austria, Russia, and England, 199; Ulm, Trafalgar and Austerlitz, 201; war with Prussia, 208; design on Spain, 214; grief at the death of his son, 222; goes to Spain, 225; war with Austria, 227; excommunicated by the Pope, 229; marriage with Joséphine dissolved, 237; negotiations with Vienna, 239; marriage with Maria Louisa determined, 240; marriage, 243; letter to Fouché, 251; demands Fouché's correspondence, 258; treasures, 277; seizes Holland and the Hanse towns, 279; birth of the King of Rome, 281; effects of the "continental system," 283; and England, 289; war with Russia, 319; Malet conspiracy, 323; retreat from Russia, 328; progress of the war, 335; sends Soult to Spain, 347; Fouché's note on the situation, 356; return from Elba, 421; suspects Fouché, 435; departs for Belgium, 442; defeat and return, 444; abdicates, 446; departure from Malmaison, 453.

Bonaparte, Pauline, 206, 268, 269, 270

Boulay de la Meurthe, 37, 39, 40, 44, 60, 71, 72, 81, 82, 86, 88, 94, 448, 449, 450

Bourienne, 116, 406, 417, 424, 425, 434

Broglie, Marshal, 5

Brune, General, 24, 27, 30, 31, 33, 34, 44, 115, 135, 187, 323, 404

Cadoudal, Georges, 125, 126, 130, 179, 180, 182, 188

Callot, 102, 103

Cambacérès, 88, 94, 98, 99, 110, 111, 118, 125, 140, 151, 156, 166, 180, 187, 189, 206, 231, 236, 237, 282, 314, 324, 328, 329, 330, 333, 339, 384, 388, 408, 420, 427

Canning, Rt. Hon. George, 242, 243

Carnot, 13, 15, 18, 22, 104, 108, 110, 118, 418, 420, 427, 435, 448, 450, 453, 456, 459, 465, 468

Castlereagh, Lord, 242, 316, 334

Cathcart, Lord, 322

Condorcet, Marquis de, 8

Cornwallis, Marquis, 147, 149

Cornet, 73, 74, 75

Couthon, 14

Danton, 12

Davoust, 187, 420, 427, 438, 442, 445, 453, 456

Dubois, 113, 189, 244, 256, 257, 323, 413

Dumouriez, General, 68

Duroc, 111, 113, 148, 166, 186, 258, 259, 302, 314, 344, 427

Enghien, Duke d', 179, 181, 194, 195

Fouché, Joseph, not responsible for the revolution, 2; birth and education, 7; acquaintance with Robespierre, 8; defends Vergniaud, 9; on his vote for execution of Louis XIV., 10; mission to provinces, 11; expelled the Jacobin club, 12; struggle with Robespierre, 13; end of the Reign of Terror, 15; takes government contracts, 19; advice to Barras, 22; nominated ambassador, 24; at Milan, 27; message to the Cisalpine republic, 32; expulsion from Italy, 34; ambassador to Holland, 41; minister of police, 46; closes the hall of the Jacobins, 53; suppresses the press, 56; Bonapartist intrigues, 62; Joséphine in his pay, 63; interview with Bonaparte, 68; opposes proscriptions, 90; detects plots, 117, 123; royalist attempt to assassinate Bonaparte, 127; memorial on peace, 150; dismissed, 166; senator of Aix, 169; commissioner to Switzerland, 170; intercedes

for the Duke d'Enghien, 181; again police minister, 188; created Duke of Otranto, 207; and the English Cabinet, 210; advises Napoleon to divorce Joséphine, 224; interview with Joséphine, 224; orders levy of national guards, 231; advice to Napoleon, 235; negotiations with the Marquess of Wellesley, 243; discovered by Napoleon, 245; disgrace, 245; governor-general of Rome, 250; retires to his château, 254; searched for papers, 256; Napoleon demands his correspondence, 258; flight to Florence, 261; resolves to go to America, 263; submits to the Emperor, 264; retires to Aix, 265; reflections on the Peninsular War, 292; returns to Ferrières, 302; memorial on the war with Russia, 306; audience with the Emperor, 309; ordered to headquarters, 343; on the position, 348; governor-general of Illyria, 359; plan for a regency, 361; at Prague, 364; state of Illyria, 369; retreat, 374; mission to Murat, 380; letter to Napoleon, 384; conducts the evacuation of Italy, 399; at Lyons, 402; plot, 405; letter to Napoleon at Elba, 409; advice to Louis XVIII., 414; attempted arrest, 424; again at head of police, 426; offers to Louis, 432; accepted by Wellington, 432; in danger of being shot, 435; communication with Metternich, 435; puts down insurrection in La Vendée, 438; communication with Wellington, 443; action on defeat of Napoleon, 444; head of the provisional government, 448; negotiations with Wellington, 451; letter to the King, 461; interview, 464; opposes the proscription, 467; publishes his notes and reports, 468; end, 469
Fontanes, 151, 152, 154, 164, 184, 205, 261
Fox, Charles James, 208

Gohier, 41, 45, 46, 50, 53, 57, 59, 60, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80
Grouchy, General, 328, 430
Guiche, Duchesse de, 105, 106

Hawkesbury, Lord, 144, 243
Haydn, 126
Hoche, General, 21, 36
Howick, Lord, 210
Hullin, 324, 327

Josephine, 62, 64, 74, 75, 100, 106, 111, 118, 122, 130, 137, 185, 186, 222, 223, 224, 225, 237, 269
Joubert, General, 33, 34, 36, 41, 42, 46, 49, 55, 59
Jourdan, Marshal, 27, 36, 57, 58, 60, 65, 69, 85, 87, 90, 115, 187, 293, 347
Junot, General, 138, 159, 359, 367

Kosciusko, 297

Labouchère, 274, 275, 336
Lafayette, 4, 68, 420, 422, 445, 449n.
Lannes, 70, 80, 85, 116, 117, 130, 187
Laplace, 88
Lauderdale, Lord, 208
Lavalette, 165, 287, 425
Lebrun, 98, 99, 103, 105, 106, 110, 111, 118, 125, 151, 166, 180, 187, 206, 333, 337
Lefebvre, 116
Lefévre, 52, 59, 70, 75, 187
Liverpool, Lord, 144, 243
Louis XIV., 5
Louis XVI., 109
Louis XVIII., 413, 416, 425, 430, 434, 443, 450, 452, 454, 457, 459, 460, 461, 463, 465, 466

Macdonald, 70, 182, 362
Mallet, General, 193, 323, 325, 326, 327, 330
Marbot, 52
Maret, 298, 299, 315, 316, 317, 319, 333, 334, 354, 406, 430, 444, 445, 450
Maria Antoinette, 244

Maria Louisa, 237, 240, 243, 268, 270, 282, 324, 339, 388, 421
Marmont, 70
Massena, General, 183, 187, 193, 228, 294, 295, 323, 325
Menou, General, 144, 159
Merlin, 22, 25, 26, 28, 30, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41
Metternich, 239, 338, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 355, 362, 363, 370, 405, 431, 432, 435, 436, 437, 438, 443, 461
Mirabeau, 4
Moreau, 36, 57, 59, 70, 71, 80, 114, 115, 123, 133, 134, 148, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 325, 356
Moulins, 41, 45, 46, 50, 53, 57, 59, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 86
Murat, Joachim, King of Naples, 70, 76, 84, 85, 86, 136, 180, 187, 206, 220, 229, 294, 341, 342, 343, 354, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 389, 390, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 404, 439

NARBONNE, COUNT DE, 238, 239, 302, 338, 347, 348, 350, 354, 360, 362, 363, 364, 369
Necker, 4
Nelson, Admiral, 140
Nesselrode, 304, 461
Ney, General, 172, 187, 331, 354, 357

OUVRARD, 102, 243, 245

PARKER, ADMIRAL HYDE, 140
Paul I., Emperor of Russia, 104, 136, 139, 140, 141
Peltier, 176
Pichegru, 35, 180
Pitt, William, 142, 208
Pius VII., 195, 217, 229
Portalis, 151

RÉCAMIER, MADAME, 72
Rewbel, 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, 34, 37
Robespierre, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16
Rode, 138
Rome, King of, 281
Rousseau, J. J., 3
Rumbold, Sir George, 192, 193

ST. HELENS, LORD, 142
St. Just, 14
Santerre, 79
Savary, 166, 182, 200, 203, 218, 232, 245, 250, 252, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 300, 311, 313, 317, 327, 328, 329, 339, 388, 412, 413, 415, 425, 429, 433, 440
Schwartzenberg, Prince of, 240, 243, 244, 346, 356
Sieyes, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 59, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 169
Souchet, 295
Stäel, Madame de, 26, 238, 285, 323, 356

TALLIEN, 13
Tallien, Madame, 76
Talleyrand, 26, 66, 67, 69, 70, 76, 77, 78, 85, 86, 88, 121, 136, 143, 146, 163, 178, 180, 188, 192, 198, 207, 213, 217, 218, 225, 245, 287, 288, 314, 325, 333, 336, 337, 362, 383, 384, 406, 408, 432, 433, 434, 438, 454

VERGNIAUD, 8, 9
Villeneuve, Admiral, 197
Voltaire, 3, 20

WALPOLE, LORD, 329, 333
Wellesley, Marquis, 243, 245, 274, 275, 405, 432
Wellington, Duke of, 294, 295, 347, 403, 432, 443, 450, 451, 452, 454, 455, 459, 460
Whitworth, Lord, 177

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